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Crossway

THE MAGAZINE OF CHURCH SOCIETY

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EQUIPPING GOD'S PEOPLE TO LIVE GOD'S WORD

Wrestling in prayer

Nigel Atkinson looks at the crucial importance of disciplined prayer in our spiritual battle.

Orthodox Anglicans who are currently members of the Church of England are aware that they are in the midst of a great struggle, not just for the soul of the Church but also for the heart of the nation.

For some, this awareness has come as a surprise, perhaps even as a shock. Until relatively recently it was generally taken for granted that the Church of England and the State were working together in a joint project to uphold and sustain what was understood to be the common good. Due to the Church's establishment, this gave the Church of England privileges that other churches did not enjoy and as a result Anglicans, at times, allowed themselves to bask in the warm sunshine of State approval and sanction – from which the Church derived a (false) sense of security.

This once-cosy relationship had been under strain for some time, and was finally fractured when David Cameron, declaring that 'love is love', introduced gay marriage. In so doing, he undermined the teaching of the Church of which he was a member.

The Church, placed as she is in a hostile world, is a church in the wilderness.

Living in the wilderness

We now are experiencing deep alienation as the Church, suddenly exposed, and out of step with the intelligentsia, seeks to reclothe herself in the garments of State approval. As the Bishop of Oxford recently said: 'We now have a profound dislocation between the Church of England...and the society we are called to serve.' ('Together in Love and Faith', p.20) In this he is correct. However, he is incorrect in the solution he offers – namely that the Church should change her understanding of marriage as being between one man and one woman for life.

Before I go any further let me say one thing. This is a cause for lament, and we should lament. For it was a good and noble thing that the State was able to assent to basic Christian doctrines and help frame society around them, because from these flowed innumerable blessings, not least to the children in our society. And it is a tragedy that this is no longer the case.

Having said that, it is worth reminding ourselves of a great spiritual truth that we might have forgotten: the Church, placed as she is in a hostile world, is a church in the wilderness. As the writer to the Hebrews reminds us over and over again, the New Testament people of God are analogous to the Old Testament people of God. When they had been rescued from the pleasures of Egypt with its abundance of fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic (Numbers 11:5) they suddenly found themselves undergoing a time of deep trial and difficulty, a time of testing, in a 'vast and dreadful

wilderness', a 'thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions' (Deuteronomy 8:15). We can all be nostalgic for the 'good old days', forgetting just how bad they were.

The Old Testament people of God were looking forward to and seeking their earthly rest in the yet-to-be-revealed Promised Land but still came under constant pressure to fall away as they were battling the Hittites, Perizzites and Jebusites. So also the Church today, as she is looking forward to her yet-to-be-revealed final heavenly rest, is also enduring a severe time of testing and affliction and under constant pressure to apostatise. Our battle is not 'against flesh and blood' but 'against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms' (Ephesians 6:12). We fight against what the Apostle Paul elsewhere calls 'hollow and deceptive philosophy' (Colossians 2:8), 'false doctrines' (1 Timothy 1:3) and 'the elemental spiritual forces of the world' (Galatians 4:3). Needless to say, the danger that many of our number might also fall away and not enter our rest because of 'a sinful, unbelieving heart' (Hebrews 3:12) is as great as it ever was in the time of Moses. Sadly, recent history has given us some prominent examples of just such turning away.

Praying in the Spirit

So how are we to respond to this? Well, the Apostle Paul exhorts us to 'struggle', to fight, to put on the full armour of God. And then, immediately following those exhortations to

Prayer Diary: January

Please pray every day that God's blessing will be on Church Society to sustain it and guide its ministry.

1 Pray for God's provision for the ministry of Church Society over the coming year. For the Directors, other staff and many volunteers to be refreshed and filled with enthusiasm for the year ahead.

2 Evenlode, St Edward (Gloucester) – P-in-C, Oliver Strange.

3 Exeter, Holy Trinity (Exeter) – Vicar, Jonny Elvin.

4 Fowey, St Fimbarrus (Truro) – Vacancy.

5 Pray for the Church Society staff team as they meet in Watford today, and for Lee Gatiss leading the meeting.

So then let us not sleep …
but let us keep awake and be sober.
1 Thessalonians 5:6

6 Freethorpe & Reedham (Norwich) – Vacancy.

7 Frettenham (Norwich) – Rector, Christopher Engelsen. Please pray for St Swithin's as we prepare for a vacancy in February and the diocese explores what new ministry might be possible.

8 Pray for Lee Gatiss preaching at Christ Church, Cambridge today.

9 Pray for Luckley House School, for which Church Society appoints Trustees, for wisdom and boldness for the senior team and governors to uphold a biblical Christian ethos through all aspects of school life.

10 Pray for today's NoRM Church Revitalisation Webinar 'Sowing generously: finance and administration'.

11 Frodingham North* (York) – Vacancy.

12 Pray for Kirsten Birkett's work as Theological Consultant, and Assistant Editor of *The Global Anglican*, to be prayerful and biblical.

13 Pray for those Church Society members who write hymns and songs.

Prayer is inextricably and unavoidably part of our struggle. It is part of our warfare. It is how we are to fight and strive and contend.

struggle and strive and contend for the truth and to 'stand firm' in the 'external' arena of the world he places before us a final exhortation to 'pray in the Spirit on all occasions' (Ephesians 6:18); which, given the context, can be rightly seen as a continuation of the same struggle. This is a concentrated, internal struggle to pray and to keep on praying. We see a similar thing in Colossians 4:12 where Paul commends Epaphras who is always 'wrestling in prayer' that the Colossians may stand firm in their wilderness battles; and again in Romans 15, where Paul pleads with the Roman Christians to join him in his struggle by praying to God for him (Romans 15:30).

What becomes clear then, as we stand back and look at the overall context, is that prayer is inextricably and unavoidably part of our struggle. It is part of our warfare. It is how we are to fight and strive and contend. But it is more than that. It is also a poignant, painful reminder of our weakness and, indeed, a mark of our weakness. If ever we are to pray at all we must first battle and overcome our pride and self-sufficiency that persuades us that we do not need to pray in the first place because we can achieve what we need to achieve in our own strength. This, of course, is something of which we would rather not be reminded because it humbles us. It makes us small. It reminds us of our weakness and our inability and asks us to remember that God is God and we are not.

Overcoming our pride

Even before we wrestle in prayer, therefore, we need to wrestle and overcome our pride. This is, if you like, the battle before the battle. The skirmish before the fight. But it is precisely at this point that we are faced with a further obstacle. For Christians have often observed that they can more readily turn to prayer when they are desperate. When our weakness and inability so presses in on us that we are, as it were, 'forced' to pray because tragedy has invaded our lives. At such times our prayers can be intense and passionate as we storm the gates of heaven and on our knees, we plead with the Lord to help us and deliver us.

But even at this point our self-sufficiency is often at work. The reason our prayers are so intense may simply be that we want the Lord to remove the cause of our frailty so that we might return to our lives of independence as quickly as we can. Which means that, more often than we care to admit, our prayers are an intrinsic part of our 'groaning', 'wrestling' and 'fighting' in this world where we do not even know how to pray or perhaps, even more alarmingly, even what to pray for (Romans 8:26).

This of course has profound implications. In the language of the Epistle to the Hebrews it means we can so easily 'drift away' (Hebrews 2:1). That we become so hardened by sin's 'deceitfulness' (Hebrews 3:13) that we 'fall short' (Hebrews 4:1).

Becoming more disciplined

The remedy must be that we become that much more intentional in our prayer life. We must try to become more disciplined, organised and determined.

It might mean, for example, that we commit ourselves to saying Morning and Evening Prayer every day. This may militate against spontaneity and freedom, not in order to enslave us. Soldiers are forced to train and be drilled in all kinds of routines, so that they may win their battles. And the same is true

here. Organised, disciplined prayer reminds us that we are weak and helps us to win our battle against pride and self-sufficiency. We are in a war against an implacable foe and we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves. We have erred and strayed from God's ways like lost sheep. Only once we have registered this and acknowledged this can our hearts be warmed once more and our prayers become correspondingly authentic. That is the first remedy.

The second remedy is 'not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing' (Hebrews 10:25). Once more this takes discipline, determination, and hard work. We often do not feel like going to church, just as soldiers do not like bashing up and down the parade ground. But we must do so, whether we feel like it or not! Part of our warfare is being reminded that in this world we have no 'enduring city' (Hebrews 13:14) and that we are simply passing through the wilderness and travelling to our own Promised Land where there are many mansions. This world is not our home; a greater one is yet to be ours. Church here and now is where, in communion with the saints around the world and down through the ages, we can begin to hear a 'distant triumph song' so that 'our hearts are brave again, and arms are strong' while the battle still rages.

Nigel Atkinson is Vicar of St John's Knutsford and Toft and a member of the Church Society Council.

Prayer Diary: January

14 Fulham St Mary, West Kensington (London) – P-in-C, Joshua Lees. Please pray for our February half-term holiday club, and for our mission and outreach to young families. For the ministry team including Joshua and ordinands – Joel Wells and Esli Lees.

15 Garsdon, All Saints (Bristol) – P-in-C, Stephen Wilkinson.

16 Pray for churches in the Anglican Communion facing persecution in countries openly hostile to Christianity.

17 Pray for the ministry of Church Society Trust, our patronage board meeting today, for wise appointments in all our Trust parishes. For Paul Darlington as Chairman.

Godliness with contentment is great gain.
1 Timothy 6:6

18 Pray for the publications ministry of Church Society, that our books, articles, and online resources would be edifying and useful to the church.

19 Gaulby (Leicester) – Vacancy.

20 Gloucester Mariners – Minister, Kieran Douglass.

21 Pray for Regional Directors, Tony Cannon, George Crowder and Chris Moore, to be effective in supporting gospel ministry across the country, and to work well with local and regional networks.

22 Greenhithe, St Mary (Rochester) – P-in-C, Charlotte Lloyd-Evans.

23 Pray for ministers who are approaching retirement. Pray that they may be open to new opportunities for service, and pray that their practical needs will continue to be met.

24 Hailsham, St Mary (Chichester) – Vacancy. Praise God for the many opportunities we had to share the gospel in the town over Christmas. Please pray for fruit. Ask God to make it clear who should be the next vicar of Hailsham Parish Church.

Praying hymns and singing prayers

Marc Lloyd explores the close connections between singing and praying.

The Apostle Paul urges us in Ephesians 5 to 'be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ' (vv18–20). It is worth noting the horizontal (to one another) and vertical dimensions here (to the Lord). Our singing has an internal (from the heart) and an external component (literally singing and making music). Our music and singing burst out, flowing from thankful hearts, giving expression to our praises and petitions.

In the next chapter, again speaking of the Holy Spirit, Paul tells us to: 'pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people' (6:18). These two passages suggest that we might usefully combine song and prayer more often and more consciously than we do. Paul's 'all kinds of prayers' could include psalms, songs, hymns and chants.

Our music and singing burst out, flowing from thankful hearts, giving expression to our praises and petitions.

Praise, prayer, petition

Perhaps we most naturally associate singing with praise and thanksgiving. Maybe at times you spontaneously break forth into a joyful song. But there is no sharp dividing line in Scripture between praise and prayer or petition. When we praise God for his power and love, it is natural that we bring our needs to him as requests for his mercy and help. It honours God when we bring our needs to him, trusting that he cares for us and is more than able to provide for all our needs. Almost the whole of The Lord's Prayer could be said to ask for things. Petitions are also very frequent in the Psalms. If we allow that the psalms are songs, they show us very clearly the combination of singing and petition, as well as praise and thanksgiving.

Saying and singing

We sometimes hear a lot about silent prayer. But Jesus seems to think that prayer is talking to God with words. 'When you pray, say…', he says, as he introduces The Lord's Prayer (Luke 11:2). The ordinary Greek word for saying (*legw*) can also be used to introduce a song, as in Revelation 5:9 when the four living creatures and the twenty-four sing 'a new song' to the Lamb, 'saying': 'You are worthy…'. As we think about praying we do not need a firm boundary between saying and singing. Bible scholars love to point out that some passages of the New Testament may have originated as hymns (e.g. Philippians 2:5–11; Colossians 1:15–20).

The vestry in one of the churches I serve has a chorister's prayer displayed on the wall: 'Grant

that what we sing with our lips, we may believe in our hearts, and what we believe in our hearts we may show forth in our lives.' We know that the Spirit aids us in prayer (Romans 8:15, 26f; Galatians 4:6), and we might also pray that he aids our singing. I feel I need all the help I can get with harmony, but especially we might pray that our songs might be in harmony with our lives.

Traditional worship has sometimes involved singing parts of the liturgy. This might not be to your taste, or perhaps you find it difficult to understand, but it is an attempt to offer something beautiful to God. Our inexhaustible and infinite God is surely worthy of the most polyphonic praise, and members of the congregation and their pastors can take different parts. A biblical case can certainly be made for a variety of instruments, so that our worship enacts a unity in diversity. The corporate gathered worship of the church might thus display 'the manifold wisdom of God' (cf. Ephesians 3:10), especially if music of different styles and from different cultures are included.

Praying hymns and singing prayers

Some of our best-loved hymns are in the form of prayers. I've been making a list of hymns or songs which directly address God, or one of the divine persons, and contain some kind of petition. You can probably think of others.

It would be good for us to slow down and pray these hymns thoughtfully in corporate worship. Perhaps from time to time we might have some silence before or after singing them that we might pray.

Prayer Diary: January–February

25 Pray for Lee Gatiss, Ros Clarke and other Church Society Council members attending the meeting of CEEC today and tomorrow. For wisdom, unity and courage in the ongoing debates in the CofE.

26 Halliwell, St Paul (Manchester) – Team Rector, Stephen Tranter. We give thanks for lay volunteers who assist in leading worship, including more recently technical assistance with livestreaming as part of West Bolton Team online worship. Pray for growing links with community projects in the hall.

27 Pray for clergy (both employed and unemployed) looking for posts.

The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord *establishes his steps.* Proverbs 16:9

28 Harborne, St John the Baptist (Birmingham) – Vicar, Leonard Browne. Give thanks for lots of new people on Sundays and increased contacts through our outreach 'Bridge-Building' ministries. Pray for more people coming to faith and everyone being equipped for ministry both within and beyond our church community.

29 Pray for Lee Gatiss's writing ministry, that his books and articles would be edifying and useful to the church.

30 Pray for the FWS Conference over the next three days on the theme of 'Leadership Reset – in an age of scandals, struggles and schism'. For clear, bold talks and an edifying time for all. For speakers Lee Gatiss and James Hughes.

31 Continue to pray for the FWS Conference today and tomorrow, especially as they consider the subjects of 'Leadership and authority in Christian doctrine, the church, and the world'. For speakers Lee Gatiss, Rob Munro, George Crowder, Ros Clarke and Clare Hendry.

February

1 Hartford, St John (Chester) – Vicar, Mike Smith.

One of the greatest needs of the modern evangelical church is surely to recover the psalms, the Bible's hymn-prayers, as more central to our daily devotions and our corporate worship.

We all find ourselves struggling to pray in our private devotions sometimes. If you don't know what to say to God, you could do much worse than to reach for a good hymn book! And when you raise your voice to your heavenly Father in prayer, why not also raise it in song? What better way to use our breath than to direct it back to our Maker and Sustainer from whom it came?

Praying and singing the psalms

One of the greatest needs of the modern evangelical church is surely to recover the psalms, the Bible's hymn-prayers, as more central to our daily devotions and our corporate worship. We're thinking in this issue of *Crossway* about *contending* in prayer and the psalms might be called the church's war songs. As we cry to God for victory, we also hearten one another with a song. If the walls of Jericho fell as the people obediently sounded their trumpets and shouted, let's pray that God would build his church and kingdom as we sing the songs he has given us.

One of the great advantages of Anglican chant is that it enables us to sing the words of Scripture from any English translation. But if I'm honest I'm terribly unmusical so I find myself reaching for metrical versions. Many good sources of metrical psalms are readily available: *Praise*! has at least one setting of every Psalm (or a part of it) and *Christian Hymns* (published by the Evangelical Movement of Wales) lists many metrical psalms or hymns based on psalms or part of psalms. Matt Searles has produced several albums of psalms set to contemporary and traditional tunes, suitable for congregational singing. Sheet music and accompanying devotions are also available on his website: mattsearles.org.uk/

With such an abundance of resources in print and online there really is no excuse for neglecting the only infallible prayer-hymn book God has given us. When we pray and sing the psalms, we know that we are doing so according to God's will. God-given human words are offered back to him.

The delights of the ear

If we're struggling in our personal praying, a pre-recorded psalm or other song might give us words. If our hearts are cold, a song might warm us up as we seek to join in. Sometimes it might be as much as we can manage to sit and weep while we listen to a song or a psalm. God is surely pleased to hear the inarticulate cries of his children's hearts, even if on occasion or for a season we can't bring ourselves to speak or sing.

Musical prayers can have other advantages. For example, if we are tempted to gabble through our prayers at maximum speed, a song might help us to slow down and reflect. Some repetition or musical interludes can allow words to sink in. Music also powerfully engages the emotions so that songs can enable us to pray not only with head but with heart. Music can both express and help to generate appropriate feelings.

Music can also be memorable. Songs stock our minds with psalms and prayers which we can make our own as we walk the dog or do the dishes. A tune can make good words portable, stored in your mind rather than only on book or tablet. Singing engages our bodies more vigorously than a prayer which is merely mental, whispered or spoken. Some of us may find singing helps our concentration.

Augustine worried about 'the delights of the ear' conquering him:

> Sometimes I appear to myself to give them more respect than is fitting, as I perceive that our minds are more devoutly and earnestly elevated into a flame of piety by the holy words themselves when they are thus sung, than when they are not.

Music can lead to the gratification of the flesh which runs ahead of reason. Yet he concludes:

> Notwithstanding, when I call to mind the tears I shed at the songs of Thy Church, at the outset of my recovered faith, and how even now I am moved not by the singing but by what is sung, when they are sung with a clear and skilfully modulated voice, I then acknowledge the great utility of this custom.

Though he is conflicted he says: 'I approve of the use of singing in the church, that so by the delights of the ear the weaker minds may be stimulated to a devotional frame' (*Confessions*, Book X, Chapter 33).

So let us raise our voices together and individually in prayer and in song.

Marc Lloyd is Rector of Warbleton, Dallington and Bodle Street Green churches in rural Sussex. http://marclloyd.blogspot.com/2022/10/hymns-and-songs-which-are-prayers.html

Prayer Diary: February

2 Hastings, Emmanuel (Chichester) – Vicar, Martin Lane. Give thanks for the gospel unity we enjoy and for God to preserve it. Please pray for God's provision to sustain the ministry here, for growth in one-to-one Bible reading, for fruitful evangelism, for loving relationships, and for wise decision-making.

3 Pray for evangelical bishops in the Church of England to stand firm for Jesus amidst all the pressures of their role.

4 Hemswell (Lincoln) – P-in-C, Mark Briscoe.

5 Henham (Chelmsford) – Vicar, Louis Wilson. Pray for the new monthly all-age service recently started with a view to reaching out to local families. For a large reordering project in one of our church buildings which has been long in the planning and due to start this month. A joint church weekend away in February, that the teaching and the time away together would be a great blessing.

The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot. Psalm 16:5

6 Give thanks for the Church Society members on the General Synod. Pray for them to contend for the gospel wisely and boldly, especially with the ongoing debates about sexuality as Synod meets this week.

7 Continue to pray for the General Synod meeting this week, as various proposals concerning next steps after the LLF process are debated. Pray for wisdom, graciousness and courage.

8 Pray that as the General Synod continues its discussions, evangelical bishops will take a lead in speaking up for the truth of the gospel, the authority of Scripture and the seriousness of sin.

9 Pray for Ros Clarke, and the other complementarian members of the standing commission on the 5 Guiding Principles, meeting after General Synod.

PRAYING TOGETHER

There is nothing better than getting to know people through the Church Society Zoom Prayer meeting. We are given godly teaching which focuses us in our prayers. In small breakout groups we pray for many issues facing our Christian life as we try to serve our Lord Jesus with a humble heart in all that we do.

We are kept up to date with what is happening in the Church of England so that we can pray that God's will is done. It's good to see the faces of many Christian brothers and sisters we often only read about, and also to share their news of what is happening in their churches.

I try to make this prayer meeting a priority as Jesus loves us to pray, and what a privilege it is to have a Saviour who listens to us through our prayers and speaks to us through his word. I would encourage many more of you to come and pray – it's a joy.

Barb Sweeting Women's Ministry Co-ordinator, Christ Church Leyton and a regular attendee at the monthly online Church Society Prayer Meetings.

Prayer is powerful

Tim Buckley shares how prayer helps in the everyday life of ministry.

In October I celebrated twenty years of being in post down here in Devonport. It was never my intention to stay this long, but clearly God had other ideas. So, to my surprise, I have stayed, and as I look back over all that has happened, I cannot stress enough how important prayer has been. So much, after all, has changed. The churches, the buildings, the people are all very different from when I started. There have been personal challenges along the way, and those global events such as the pandemic which have affected us all at the deepest level. It is only the knowledge that Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday and today for forever (Hebrews 13:8) that sustains me, and the promise that prayer offered in his name is powerful and effective.

So how exactly does prayer help in the everyday of ministry?

First of all, **prayer roots me in God's grace**. So often I set out to achieve goals in my own strength, or else I measure the effectiveness of my ministry by my busyness or the number of people I reach. Prayer, however, takes me back to the cross, and tells me I am who I am only because of what Jesus has done for me. And that is a great liberation. Not only does that knowledge free me from the endless pursuit of more activity, it also frees me from comparing myself with others whose ministry seems infinitely more fruitful and productive.

Secondly, **prayer roots me in God's word**. After all, it follows that if I am to pray in the name of Jesus, I need to learn more about him day by day, and deepen my relationship with him. That is why for me there is an unbreakable link between prayer and Bible reading. It is God's word that shapes and sharpens my prayers. It is prayer that turns the act of reading into a Spirit-filled encounter with the one who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning.

Thirdly, **prayer roots me in God's will**. Sometimes as I walk around my patch, I get a feeling I need to go down this one particular street. More often than not, it turns out to be the Holy Spirit's prompting and I end up having a significant encounter. But then I shouldn't be surprised. The point of offering myself in Jesus' service is that I might know his good, pleasing and perfect will (Romans 12:2). The trouble is, I can often only see where God was leading me with hindsight, and I am fully prepared to admit my failure to act first, and listen second.

This is why for me prayer not only begins but also ends in the goodness and mercy of God. So when I am tempted to talk about my church or my mission or my achievements, prayer corrects that perspective, points instead to Jesus, and reminds me who is Lord. And for that, I am, and will always remain, eternally grateful.

Tim Buckley is vicar of St Michael and St Barnabas with St Aubyn's, Devonport and chair of Exeter DEF. The Drumchester Diaries *(Mirador, 2022) is his first novel.*

Contending in prayer

Martin Davy brings encouragement to learn from Jesus, depend on God and contend together in prayer.

At the next General Synod, Living in Love and Faith will be on the agenda. The College of Bishops will have shared with Synod their recommendations for discussion surrounding the Living in Love and Faith process.

Whilst some of those reading this will be contending for Biblical orthodoxy on the floor of Church House in London, many of us may feel as though it is a waiting game. We sit back and get on with things as we wait for news from those in the know. We let go and let them get on with it. And yet that is not right.

We must not put onto the shoulders of faithful men and women the sole responsibility of steering the ship that is the Church of England to renewed centrality of biblical faith. We, together, 'are a fellowship contending to reform and renew the Church of England in biblical faith'. And since we are to contend together, we need to remember what our most powerful tool is, that we might stand together and seek a renewed conviction in God's Church of God's mission… prayer.

Whilst there is a narrative that there is inevitability about the future, nothing is inevitable, but all is God-ordained. And we know that God responds in his infinite wisdom and omnitemporal nature to our prayers. So how should we contend in prayer? For what it is worth, here is how I am encouraged to pray, and I trust it will be an encouragement to you too.

Contend in prayer shamelessly, persistently, without pride, as we knock on the door of our heavenly Father who neither slumbers nor sleeps.

Pray with shameless audacity

In Luke 11:1–13 Jesus teaches his disciples how to pray. Having taught a model of prayer with the Lord's Prayer, Jesus goes on to tell a parable of a man who is persistent, bold and downright stubborn in his request for some bread. The man's 'shameless audacity' drives his awakened neighbour to give in, get up and give bread. But, of course, when it comes to the awakened neighbour, this is a parable of contrasts.

Though the neighbour sleeps and is upset to be disturbed, God 'will neither slumber nor sleep' (Psalm 121:4). Where the neighbour's door is locked, the temple curtain is torn down meaning 24/7 access to the throne room of heaven. Asking, seeking and knocking will, says Jesus, be met by God the Father giving exactly what we need when we need it (Luke 11:13).

Yet, see how Jesus describes this petitioning that would be responded to by a disgruntled

neighbour, and so certainly responded to by our gracious God – verse 8, shameless audacity. What are you if you are audacious? You are daring, and bold, and willing to take a risk.

Do you feel synod is a foregone conclusion? Have you been praying for the Church of England to be brought back to its roots of biblical faith? Have you prayed for your bishops to stand faithfully and firm? You asked once – ask again, and again and again!

And when we ask, in this audacious way, we must leave our pride at the door. Look at the desperate person Jesus illustrates. He doesn't just bang on the door once – but it seems again and again until he gets what he needs… he's shameless. And he prays because he is bothered about another… his friend on that journey (verse 6).

Similarly, we pray with shameless audacity because we're bothered about the needs of others. We're bothered about the nation of people who need the true apostolic gospel.

Contend in prayer shamelessly, persistently, without pride, as we knock on the door of our heavenly Father who neither slumbers nor sleeps.

And we must not do it alone…

Pray together

In the church where I minister, we have enjoyed working our way through the first part of the book of Acts. One thing that has really struck us is the power of corporate prayer.

Acts 1:14, 'They all joined together constantly in prayer….'

Prayer Diary: February

10 Hoo St Mary (Rochester) – Vicar, Stephen Gwilt. Our parishes are undergoing the prospect of great change with the trebling in size due to development. Pray that we would have a balanced response, see opportunities for the gospel, and even now start preparing hearts to receive the good news.

11 Pray for Church Society members to increasingly feel part of our fellowship, through the prayer meetings, webinars, and other events and resources. Pray that no one will feel as though they are contending alone for the gospel in the Church of England.

12 Hurworth (Durham) – Vacancy.

13 Pray for evangelical members of deanery and diocesan synods. Pray that they will have a positive effect on decisions to allow for more gospel ministry to flourish. Pray that they will be gracious towards those with whom they disagree.

14 Kencot (Oxford) – Rector, Harry MacInnes.

15 Pray for the King and the Royal Family.

Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.
Colossians 3:2

16 Kingham with Daylesford, Churchill & Sarsden (Oxford) – Team Vicar, David Salter.

17 Knodishall w. Buxlow* (St Eds & Ips) – P-in-C, Sarah Houssemayne du Boulay.

18 Pray for the Government, and especially for Christians in Parliament to stand firm in their faith.

19 Lightbowne Evangelical Church, Manchester.

20 Pray for AMiE and ANiE, that the kingdom may grow through their work.

21 Pray for the ministry of Church Society Trust, our patronage board meeting today, for wise appointments in all our Trust parishes. For Paul Darlington as Chairman.

The Lord's Prayer can be such a springboard for prayer as we pray for the beauty of God's kingdom to be fully realised in our hearts as well as in his Church.

So let us pray for continual dependence on God in our hearts, as well as in his Church.

2:42. 'They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.'

4:24, 'When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God.'

And the list goes on – it is together in prayer that the apostles appoint the seven men; together in prayer that the church prayed for the imprisoned Peter (12:5). And together in prayer that the church sent out workers into the harvest field (13:3).

It is together in prayer that we contend and pray for God's Church, the Church of England, the bishops, those standing up for biblical truth on the floor of General Synod.

My encouragement here is also pointed towards DEF leaders, regional ReNew leaders and church leaders – call a prayer meeting so that you can practise together praying with shameless audacity.

Pray when all you can do is groan

It is possible that we can miss out on contending in prayer because we think detail matters.

> Learning to groan is a key aspect of the Christian response to problems. The Bible gives us permission to express our pain. We find that over one-third of the psalms are laments where God's faithful servants groan about their problems.
>
> Ajith Fernando, *The Family Life of a Christian Leader* (Crossway Books, 2016)

Romans 8 reminds us that groaning is part of what it is to cry out to God. How precious that in our groanings, '…the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans (Romans 8:26)

Bringing our requests to God does not mean we always know the detail. But he does.

And it is why, back to Luke 11, the Lord's Prayer can be such a springboard for prayer as we pray for the beauty of God's kingdom to be fully realised in our hearts as well as in his Church. So let us pray for continual dependence on God in our hearts, as well as in his Church. Let us pray for recognition of the need to forgive, as well as our certain need to be forgiven. Let us pray that we and God's Church would remember the ease with which we can give way to the temptations of the world around it. Let us together contend in prayer.

Martin Davy is Vicar of Holy Trinity Church, Theale and a member of the Church Society Council.

Prayer Diary: February

22 Lindfield, All Saints (Chichester) – Vicar, Steve Nichols. Give thanks for many newcomers to the church since Covid. Please pray in this new chapter of our life for growing personal relationships, for unbelievers to be converted and for a move for many from the fringe of things to the core. Pray for wisdom as we respond to all that is going on in the wider CofE and that we would preach the gospel and see people born again and built up to be life-long followers of the Lord Jesus.

23 Pray for *The Global Anglican* journal, that its reach may expand and grow and that the journal would a great help to Anglicans around the world.

24 Lydford-on-Fosse (Bath & Wells) – P-in-C, Jane Durham. Please pray for the parishes of Wheathill Priory Benefice including Lydford-on Fosse during their incumbent Jane's sabbatical. Please pray too as we continue to seek ways to connect with the communities around us.

Shepherd the flock of God that is among you.
1 Peter 5:2

25 Pray for clergy who face opposition and difficulty in their parish, and from the wider church, to remain faithful.

26 Pray for churchwardens to be a strong support for their clergy, taking away administrative and other burdens, to free vicars up for pastoral ministry. Pray especially for wardens serving during interregnums, to care for the flock and make wise contributions to the process of appointing new incumbents.

27 Manningford Bruce & Abbots (Salisbury) – Team Rector, Rhona Floate. As a team we give thanks for all who serve God and seek to make his kingdom more real in this place, for the arrival of the new Team Rector and for God's guidance in seeking the person of his choice to fill the remaining vacancy in our team.

28 Pray for Ros Clarke speaking at a Keswick Bible Teaching Workshop on the Song of Songs today and tomorrow.

Producing the prayer diary

Guy Thorburn explains how he writes the fortnightly Church Society Members' Prayer Diary.

Can I begin this article by saying what a privilege and a pleasure it has been to write the Church Society Prayer Diary over the past four-and-a-half years, and to say how grateful I have been for the support and encouragement of the Church Society staff.

Shortly after I retired I was asked to begin writing a Prayer Diary for Reform, and when Reform merged with Church Society the Trustees kindly asked me to continue. As I write the Diary each fortnight I pray that it will be of service, in some way, to someone, and particularly to all those who are working on the front line of ministry, either in our parishes or in their wider preaching, teaching or writing roles.

Over the last few years we have passed through so many unique and extraordinary events – the outworking of Brexit, the impact of Covid, a General Election, enormous Parliamentary turbulence, war in Ukraine, the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Her Majesty's death and the beginning of King Charles's reign, and the economic downturn, which affects us all. All these events have impacted on my prayer life, as I dare say that they have on yours, and so I have incorporated them in the Diary, as well as all the important and significant meetings and happenings in Church Society.

Each Diary entry is divided into four parts:

- A verse from the Scriptures.
- A prayer whose theme is drawn from that verse.
- A prayer which focuses either on some aspect of Church Society or on the work of other Christian organisations who share our gospel values and views (such as The Christian Institute, Oak Hill Theological College, Gafcon, Affinity, AMiE, ANiE, CEEC).
- A prayer for one of our Church Society Trust parishes or Partner Churches.

There is, of course, no situation in heaven or on earth which is beyond the reach of our Lord Jesus, who is the Word of God, and so I hope that I have been led by him to use the psalms which point to him and the Gospels which are centred on him.

The Scripture verse and prayer

In the prayer diaries I have written so far – more than 100 of them! – almost half the verses have been taken either from the Gospels or from the Psalms.

There is, of course, no situation in heaven or on earth which is beyond the reach of our Lord Jesus, who is the Word of God, and so I hope

that I have been led by him to use the psalms which point to him and the Gospels which are centred on him. After the Gospels and the Psalms, texts from the prophet Isaiah have appeared from time to time, and a number of passages from Romans.

In the following prayer I have tried to be faithful to the verse, but have also been led as the need arises to pray for some pressing need to which that verse speaks – especially during the dreadful early days of Covid.

Prayers for Church Society and fellow organisations

It has, of course, been essential to pray for the meetings of our various committees, for our General Synod members, for those writing articles for Crossway and The Global Anglican, and for the ongoing work undertaken so willingly by so many volunteers across the country, as well as the Church Society staff. In these immensely challenging days for our Church, we have also regularly prayed for the vital work of Bishop Rod Thomas and for the appointment of his successor.

I have also felt it to be very important to pray for other groups which share our views and values – for The Christian Institute as they represent orthodox Christians under attack and as they lobby Parliament on our behalf; for Oak Hill and other theological colleges as they prepare the next generation of gospel pastors and teachers; for GAFCON in its international work; for CEEC as it produces materials to encourage and instruct us all and draws

Prayer Diary: March

1 Mayfield (Lichfield) – Vicar, Brian Leathers. During the current vacancy in the benefice, please pray for the continuing of mission events such as Messy Church, and that fledgling house groups may continue to flourish under lay leadership. Pray for Preb Brian Leathers and the leadership teams as we seek to make Jesus known.

2 Holborn Queen Square (London) – Curate, James Haith.

3 Meysey Hampton (Gloucester) – Team Rector, John Swanton.

4 Pray for more evangelical archdeacons and bishops. Particularly pray that complementarian evangelicals will be appointed to these senior positions.

5 Moulton (Peterborough) – Vicar, Nick Alexander. Give thanks for a good year of mission and ministry. Most of our outreach initiatives have been working well and seeing the church come into contact with lots of non-churched folk. Please pray that this would continue and for people to turn to Christ as a result of this witness. Please pray that we would keep Jesus at the centre of all we do.

Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ. Ephesians 4:15

6 Pray for Lee Gatiss speaking in Cambridge today (and also on 13 and 20 March) at a teaching session for church members on the cross.

7 Mursley (Oxford) – Vacancy.

8 Pray today that the leaders in the Church of England would clearly proclaim the gospel when they have opportunities to speak to the nation.

9 Norwich (St Andrew) – Vicar, Martin Young. Give thanks for the slow recovery from a deep Covid membership drop, and pray that the Lord would stir us and equip us to be fruitful in evangelism as a church family.

It is always such a pleasure to include prayers written by our parish ministers and people, inviting us to pray for specific events and challenges

together DEFs across the nation. Very soon, our Church will be invited to decide which path it wishes to follow and it is going to be so important, at that point, to know that, as we have prayed for other groups of faithful ones, so they will be praying for us.

I am persuaded that the great festivals of the Church provide us with great opportunities for Christian work. People in general may no longer be very sure what Christmas and Easter are really about, let alone Advent and Lent, but these seasons can still be seized and used by us to the glory of the Lord.

Our parishes

It has been such a joy to pray for our parishes, and to imagine all the gospel work taking place in them every day. Each parish appears, hopefully, three or four times a year in the Diary and I hope that when they do, parish ministers and people, especially those in rural, difficult or isolated situations, feel encouraged by the fact that many across the country are lifting them up in prayer.

I grew up in Newcastle Diocese and my wife and I have ministered in Southwark, Carlisle and Chelmsford Dioceses, having met in Exeter Diocese, so I am familiar with quite a number of areas in the further reaches of our country. So much of what is done remains hidden, but it is always such a pleasure to include prayers written by our parish ministers and people, inviting us to pray for specific events and challenges.

Conclusion

In recent months, as I have been preparing the Prayer Diary, I have often been reminded of the fiery darts which are falling, in vast numbers every day, on Ukrainian soil, bringing death, chaos and destruction in their wake. We have had a Ukrainian family living with us and as I was writing this article we heard about rockets falling on Kiev, where our family's mother lives, and also on the school (occupied by the Russians) our mother attended.

As I think about the fiery darts in Ukraine, so my mind turns to consider the fiery darts falling in such profusion on our land – of a different nature, but no less deadly. Fired by the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly realms, by the spirit of the age and by the evil one himself. Fiery darts of deception, confusion and falsehood which, if not recognised, called out and resisted, have the power to destroy lives, businesses and churches. We need to pray that the Lord will protect us from them all.

Although I am now retired from full-time ministry and so am no longer on the front line, so to speak, it is a privilege to be able to continue to serve Christ's Church in our nation in this way. I hope that the Diary is useful and I pray that it may be used by the Lord to bind us all closer to him and to one another.

And may I just add, in closing, that it would be so good, and so encouraging, to hear when the faithful prayers of so many of our members are answered. When we know that our prayers have been heard by the Lord and that he, in his grace and mercy, has responded in some way, it is such an encouragement to us all to pray with even greater fervour.

Guy Thorburn is a retired minister and author of the fortnightly Church Society Members' Prayer Diary. To submit items for inclusion in the diary please contact the office.

The prayer of a pastor

Ros Clarke is blessed by a model pastor's prayer among the writings of a twelfth-century English monk, Aelred of Rievaulx.

How did you learn to pray? Perhaps you learned as a child, encouraged by your parents to express your thanks and requests in simple words. I hope you have learned from the example prayers in the Bible: the psalms, the Lord's prayer, Paul's prayers and others. The liturgy teaches us to pray, week by week, in the prayers we say together. I have certainly learned from all these prayers, and yet I know that, all too often, my own personal prayers are shallow and repetitive, lacking in self-awareness and in theological reflection.

That is why I find it so helpful to supplement my extempore prayers with more considered, richer and deeper written prayers. Recent books such as *Every Moment Holy* and older volumes like *The Valley of Vision* are wonderful resources for prayers which push me further. In the last few years, I have been blessed by time spent each year on the Church History module of the Priscilla Programme looking at a prayer written by Aelred of Rievaulx, a twelfth-century English monk.

Aelred's Pastoral Prayer

A number of Aelred's writings survive, including sermons, historical accounts, theological treatises and biographies. His Pastoral Prayer reflects his responsibility as Abbot at Rievaulx, and is especially valuable for people in any kind of pastoral ministry, though there is much to learn for all of us about how to pray.

The prayer is addressed to the good Shepherd, from one who is 'poor and pitiful, a shepherd of the sheep indeed, but weak and clumsy and of little use'. If Christ is the good Shepherd, Aelred knows himself to be a bad shepherd. The first main section of the prayer consists of Aelred's confession and contrition, as he considers the ways in which he is unfit for his role:

> Wretch that I am, what have I done? What have I undertaken? What was I thinking of? Or rather, sweetest Lord, what wast Thou thinking of regarding this poor wretch?

I find it so helpful to supplement my extempore prayers with more considered, richer and deeper written prayers.

He acknowledges Christ's mercy and forgiveness, but for Aelred these do not excuse him from the necessity of honest self-examination, especially as he considers the seriousness of pastoral ministry. Nonetheless, the Lord has called him into this role, and this is why he must pray so earnestly.

Aelred asks that everything he is and everything he does will be for the benefit of his flock.

Aelred's prayers for himself

The rest of the prayer is divided into prayers for himself: for wisdom, to do good for others; prayers for those he leads; and prayers for the temporal needs of his community. It is striking how much of the prayer is focused on Aelred's own character and godliness. He prays that he will be the pastor that his flock needs much more than he prays for the specific needs of his flock.

His prayers for himself begin with a plea that the Lord should see him. Aelred wants to be known by God, in order that he may be helped by God. He asks to be healed, corrected and forgiven:

> My hope, Most merciful, is Thy lovingkindness; for Thou wilt see me, either as a good physician sees, intent upon my healing, or else as a kind of master, anxious to correct, or a forbearing father, longing to forgive.

He pleads for the Lord's help in resisting sin and for the Spirit's work in cleansing his heart and 'impouring into it the increment of faith, and hope, and love, disposing it to penitence, and love, and gentleness.'

These are the things he needs for his own sake. Next he asks for the things he needs for the sake of others, most notably, wisdom. Once again, he is humbly conscious of his own lack:

> My God, Thou knowest what a fool I am, my weakness is not hidden from Thy sight. Therefore, sweet Lord, I ask Thee not for gold, I ask Thee not for silver, nor for jewels, buy only that Thou wouldest give me wisdom, that I may know to rule Thy people well.

This prayer is followed by a section in which Aelred asks that everything he is and everything he does will be for the benefit of his flock. Here it is particularly noticeable that he prays for himself and his response to their needs:

> Give me, by Thine unutterable grace, the power to bear with their shortcomings patiently, to share their griefs in loving sympathy, and to afford them help according to their needs.

Some of us might rather be inclined to pray that God help other people overcome their own shortcomings so that we do not have to bear with them! But Aelred teaches us to pray for power to bear with people patiently, for sympathy to share in their griefs, and the ability to offer whatever help they need. This is a prayer to be a better pastor, not a prayer to have an easier flock to care for.

Effective pastoral care

Similarly, he asks for discernment, so that he may know best how to help each individual in his care:

> Teach me to suit myself to everyone according to his nature, character, and disposition, according to his power of understanding, or his lack of it, as time and place require, in each case, as Thou wouldst have me do.

This is a great gift for a pastor, to know and understand each member of the congregation and be able to speak and act in the way that is most appropriate and effective for them. Pastoral care is not about knowing 'the right answers' and graciously throwing them around wherever we go. Effective pastoral care needs us to modify and shape our teaching and help so that each person hears the message in the way that speaks most powerfully to them. For Aelred this includes comforting the sorrowful, confirming the weak, raising the fallen, restraining the restless, and comforting the discouraged.

Aelred prays that he will be a good leader of those he has in his charge:

Rievaulx Abbey, North Yorkshire

> Thou knowest, Lord, I do not want to rule them harshly or self-assertively, but to help them in charity, rather than command, and to be subject to them in humility, while being always one of them in sympathy.

His prayer is not for greater power or authority. He does not ask for them to be more obedient or willing. Once again, his prayer focuses first on his own actions and his own character, so that he may lead them in ways which are better for them.

Aelred then goes on to pray for their godliness as well, asking for the Holy Spirit to be at work in them as individuals and as a community. Finally, there is a brief prayer for God to supply all the temporal needs of the community, and for Aelred to be a good steward of what they have as he oversees its distribution.

He concludes by committing the whole community into the Lord's hands, praying that they will persevere until they attain eternal life.

Learning from Aelred

There is so much for us all to learn from this pastoral prayer. Church leaders, how are you praying for yourself to be fit for your responsibility? Church members, how are you praying for your pastors? All of us, are we willing to be this honest with the Lord about our sins and weaknesses?

Aelred's Pastoral Prayer is available at akensidepress.com/books/aelred/pastoral_prayer

Ros Clarke is Associate Director of Church Society.

Prayer Diary: March

10 Pray that the Lord would raise up workers for the harvest field and particularly for men to come forward for ordination in the Church of England.

11 Old Hill, Holy Trinity (Worcester) – Vicar, Nick Gowers.

12 Pray that Anglican churches would call the nation to repent and believe the gospel, and for the Holy Spirit to bring many to a saving faith.

13 Ongar with Norton Mandeville (Chelmsford) – P-in-C, Stewart Gibbs. Give thanks for the success of our outreach projects amongst the elderly locally, also for church buildings being used as warm hubs. Pray for God's guidance as we seek to increase our presence and impact for the gospel in our communities in 2023.

14 Pray for today's NoRM Church Revitalisation Webinar 'Strength in weakness'.

15 Pray for the Church Society Council residential meeting today and tomorrow, for useful discussions and wise decisions. For Andrew Towner as Chairman.

As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.
Psalm 103:12

16 Oulton (Norwich) – Team Rector, Helen Jary.

17 Pangbourne with Tidmarsh & Sulham (Oxford) – P-in-C, Mark Hopkins.

18 Pray for the Latimer Trust and its publications ministry.

19 Parham with Hacheston (St Eds & Ips) – Vacancy.

20 Pray for the work of Affinity in connecting evangelicals across denominations in the UK. Pray for the meeting of their Advisory Council today and for Lee Gatiss on the Council.

Book review

Christmas Praise!
Abingdon-on-Thames: Praise Trust, 2022
(ISBN: 9781739156305 pb with binding, 224pp)

Christmas Praise is an excellent resource – seasonal crackers in good piano arrangements, with many more recent or even entirely new hymns/songs on Christmas themes. It sets out to offer the key classic hymns alongside other traditional carols, as well as the best of what's recent and modern, including some specifically written for this publication, and in this fully succeeds. Four aspects are specifically excellent: the variety, arrangements, words and new discoveries.

Variety: here are carols old and new, slow and fast. Most are naturally piano-based (though some would work led from the guitar), the majority suitable for whole congregations, with others easily fitted to choir, ensemble or soloist – the mix within this volume is a real strength.

Arrangements are accessible but high quality, from a simple two-bar link for Angels from the Realms of Glory or In the Bleak Midwinter to the traditional descants and last verses for Hark the Herald, Once in Royal and O Come all ye Faithful. With achievable piano parts, the music is generally excellent and to an appropriate technical level. This goes too for the settings of the new carols – the vast majority can be played by regular church musicians without too much of a sweat.

Words are likewise strong: those to new songs can be sung with confidence that good doctrine is carefully and appropriately expressed, and some old familiar moments are improved (the New Creation will be much better than waiting around, so 'there his children gather round, bright like stars with glory crowned' is a better climax to Once in Royal). The excellent fourth verse of Hark the Herald is a personal favourite of mine, yet unknown to many and here included. Wonderfully, the poetry of O Holy Night is updated to ensure that the rich theology of the original French is caught – themes of redemption, grace, sin, peace and fellowship rightly articulated – with that rolling tune which has been voted Classic FM's 'Nation's Favourite Carol' for a few years in a row.

Much of this book was new music to me, and that's a great strength. Some of the newer songs were familiar, such as O Come all ye Unfaithful or a setting to Suo Gan or What Kind of Throne?, and Guess what Happened Long Ago. Yet there were also excellent new songs/hymns from a wide variety of writers: Emu Music, the Gettys (including Matt Boswell and Matt Papa), Phil Moore, Susie Hare, Resound Worship, Sovereign Grace and others, not least a number of Praise! stalwarts. Every congregation will find here a number of top-quality new songs to add to their repertoire, refreshing their praise and stimulating their devotion.

Excitingly, the introduction expresses hope for other hymnbooks with focused themes, and these will no doubt be an excellent resource for the church too. Whether they require duplication of hymns/songs from the original Praise book (especially since online access is available) is for the editors to consider. For me, losing direct duplication in this volume could have made room both for some more informal children's songs – Colin Buchanan and Awesome Cutlery – and perhaps more of the older (80s and 90s) songs such as Like a Candle Flame and Come and Join the Celebration.

As the famous car sticker says, a dog is for life not just for Christmas, and so it is with much of this music because God incarnate is a truth for every day of our Christian walk. This book will therefore serve the church not only in December, but throughout the year, with many new songs for us to teach and enjoy all year round. We owe a debt of gratitude to the editors and arrangers, and I wholeheartedly commend this excellent resource.

Andrew Towner
Vicar, Houghton and Kingmoor, Carlisle

Church Society

EQUIPPING GOD'S PEOPLE TO LIVE GOD'S WORD

Join us...

In the current climate in the Church of England, it is increasingly important for churches and individuals to be able to clearly identify themselves as faithful to the Bible, faithful to historical Anglicanism, and faithful on the most pressing issues of the day, including matters of gender and sexuality. We need to show that we are standing together as we contend for the true gospel in the Church of England. Aligning yourself publicly with Church Society is one positive way to do this.

Partner Churches commit to praying, contending and contributing financially to the work of Church Society. They also receive a welcome package and discounted rates for our publications and conferences. Partner churches (formerly known as Supporter Churches) can also call on Church Society for advice and support for their minister, PCC and wardens, e.g. during an interregnum. Partner churches get a badge to display on their websites and a printed certificate to display in their buildings.

Church Society Members and Associates join our fellowship contending to reform and renew the Church of England in biblical faith. Members are invited to pray together online and to meet together at our various conferences and online events. They receive *Crossway* each quarter and are eligible for discounted rates on *The Global Anglican*.

All the information about individual membership and partner church support is on the Church Society website: **churchsociety.org**

Prayer Diary: March

21 Pray for the ministry of Church Society Trust, our patronage board meeting today, for wise appointments in all our Trust parishes. For Paul Darlington as Chairman. Pray also for Ros Clarke speaking at Oak Hill College today about mutual flourishing and the 5 Guiding Principles.

22 Pray for the Archbishops of Canterbury and York.

23 Peldon (Chelmsford) – Vacancy.

24 Pray for all Anglican theological colleges, and especially today for Oak Hill College and their President, Johnny Juckes.

25 Pray for parish reps and patronage organisations to work well together to maintain and establish evangelical ministry. Pray especially for dioceses to be willing to appoint more evangelicals into non-evangelical parishes.

26 Pickenham North with Houghton (Norwich) – Rector, Stephen Thorp.

27 Pray for wise administration and use of the funds and properties entrusted to Church Society for gospel work.

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. John 8:12

28 Poole, St James (Salisbury) – Rector, Lucy Holt.

29 Pray for churches with close links to schools, that they may be faithful and effective in presenting the Christian faith clearly, particularly over the Easter period.

30 Poughill, St Olaf (Truro) – P-in-C, Teresa Folland.

31 Pray for evangelistic opportunities over the Easter period. For Christ crucified, and risen, to be clearly proclaimed in the churches of our land.

Thank you for praying with us.

* Indicates that the Trust's parish is part of a larger benefice.

Crossway

Winter 2023/166
Editor: Ros Clarke

Crossway is the quarterly magazine of Church Society and is available free to members of the Society. For details of how to become a member, please check our website or contact us using the details listed below.

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UK: £10
Overseas: £17

Individual copies are available from Church Society at £1.50 plus postage. If you place an order of 10 or more copies, we will send them to you postage free.

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THE Global Anglican

Established in 1879 as *The Churchman*

The Global Anglican

The Winter 2022 issue of *The Global Anglican*, an international theological journal produced quarterly by Church Society, is now out:

- Editorial – 'The Cost of Renewal': *Peter Jensen*
- '"Spiritual Abuse": A Christocentric Response to an Ethical Crisis': *Alan Wenham*
- 'Is Nudity in Art or Entertainment a Question of Christian Liberty?': Jason Ward
- 'The Unrighteous Manager: Luke 16:1–15 "Flee Self-Righteousness"': *Vernon Wilkins*
- 'Proverbs and the Pursuit of Wisdom': Christopher Beckham

Making a bequest to Church Society

Here is a convenient form of words which can be used to make a bequest to Church Society in your Will:
'I GIVE the residue of my estate / the sum of _____ pounds (£) to CHURCH SOCIETY of Ground Floor, Centre Block, Hille Business Park, 132 St Albans Road, Watford WD24 4AE and I DIRECT that the receipt of the Administrator or other proper officer of Church Society shall be good and sufficient discharge to my Executor.'

Church Society

EQUIPPING GOD'S PEOPLE TO LIVE GOD'S WORD