



Monthly Prayer Diary Ilminster Deanery 2021

Dear Ilminster Deanery Members,

Especially in times of crisis and difficulty, we turn to God for help and strength, and it is also essential that at all times we pray whole-heartedly in our daily walk as Christ's disciples. Times are always a-changing, but the love of God is constant and unfailing, and we need to be rooted in that love.

We hope that this monthly prayer diary will help you in your prayers and will also create a fuller sense of the Deanery as a worshipping community. We all need each other, and I thank you for joining us in united prayer as we remember that we belong not only to a parish and a benefice, but also to the wider deanery.

As such prayer diaries need constant updating, we hope that you will keep an eye on the website <https://www.ilminsterdeanery.uk> and the Facebook page for the latest news, but as there is still a lot to be said for a paper copy in your hands when we turn to prayer, I hope this will be of real assistance. We will re-issue this diary twice a year or as needed.

The entries below are not in order of importance! Some months you will not need all 31 of them but you may like to incorporate all by the end of each calendar month.

So, with many thanks to you as you light your candle, settle on your knees or your seat, alone or in company – let us pray.

Revd Judith Abbott, Area Dean — December 2020

1. The Deanery leadership team: Greg Hoare (Lay Dean), Jim Webb (Assistant Lay Dean) Revds Judith Abbott (Area Dean), Ann Kember and Philip Butcher (Assistant Area Deans), Sue George (Deanery Secretary), Deanery Synod Representatives and members of the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group (DMPG); for discernment and vision in planning for the growth and flourishing of all the Churches in the Deanery, and for encouragement in challenging times.
2. We give thanks for the many lay people who initiate mission projects, run groups for adults and children, give pastoral care, commit to prayer, lead worship, care for buildings, tend churchyards, offer hospitality, for blessing and strength in all their activities.

3. Blackdown Benefice: Buckland St Mary with Birchwood, Churchstanton, Corfe, Otterford, Pitminster. Revd Jim Fallon and Dr Nick Griffin until early 2021. Reader: Nick Lewis.
4. For the work of the Holy Spirit in stirring hearts and raising new lay Church leaders from our congregations and communities; discernment in identifying gifts; readiness to explore new opportunities; Jon Mayled as he manages the Deanery Website and Facebook page, and Deanery Mission Priest Deborah Perreau; the members of other Church denominations across the Deanery, with thanks for the faith and mission we share with them in Christ.
5. Farmers, landowners and all who work in agriculture and related businesses: for careful stewardship of the land and of stock and for fair financial reward for their labours.
6. The Creation: giving thanks for the beauty of our natural environment; for relief for victims of global adverse climate change; political willingness to reduce harmful emissions; technological innovation in producing clean energy; action in our Diocese and Deanery to become carbon neutral, and Deanery ecology advisor Jonathan Farey.
7. Seven Sowers Benefice: Beercrocombe, Curry Mallet, Hatch Beauchamp, Orchard Portman, Staple Fitzpaine, Stoke St Mary with Thurlbear, West Hatch. Looking forward to the arrival of new Rector Revd Joanna Porter after a long Vacancy, to join Revds Stephen Jones and Christabel Ager. Reader: Sue McKen.
8. Bishops, Peter and Ruth, Archdeacon Simon Hill, our Deanery Accompanier Rebecca Paveley, and the staff working at Flourish House in Wells. For healing, health and continuing vision and open-heartedness in each of them, and for wisdom in all difficult decisions relating to deployment of resources.
9. PTO priests in all parishes, who give their time and wisdom of experience to congregations and younger colleagues; the clergy retirement officer, widows and widowers; Ordinands John Rollings (Chard) and Lucy Blows (Ilminster) in the challenges of their learning and training; and for the Spirit to guide others currently discerning a call to ordination and other forms of ministry.
10. 'Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful' (*Hebrews 10:23*). And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds, 'Being joyful always; and praying continually.' (*1 Thessalonians 5:16-17*)
11. Prayers of thanks for Godparents and Godchildren, and for all who teach, inspire and guide us as disciples of Jesus Christ.
12. Isle Valley Benefice: Ashill, Broadway, Donyatt, Hambridge with Earnshill, Horton, Ilton, Isle Abbots, Isle Brewers. Revds Phil Denison, Tim Gibson and Philip Albrow. Reader: Greg Hoare.

13. Church buildings: with thanks for all who strive to maintain their beauty and historic importance in each community, and as places of refuge and peace for visitors; seeking guidance to know how best the living Church members may worship in and outside church buildings in the work of sharing faith and hope in our communities.
14. Residential and Care Homes in Chard, Ilminster, Hambridge, Hatch Beauchamp, Churchinford, Horton Cross. for the happiness and safety of residents and the strength and grace of staff and visitors. For peace and rest. Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (*Matthew 11: 28-9*)
15. Ilminster and Whitelackington Benefice. Revd Jo Stobart. Reader: Claire Duncan.
16. Covid19-pandemic. For healing and comfort for the sick and bereaved, speed and precision in vaccination programmes, wisdom in strategies to manage infection risks and protection for the poor who suffer the worst of the economic effects.
17. NHS and keyworkers in our communities especially under great pressure, and with thanks for the provision of excellent ongoing healthcare in times of crisis and pain through hospitals, surgeries and dentists.
18. Worship and missional faith in churches, homegroups, Mothers' Union, schools, Messy Church, children's groups, Go Team advisor Andy Levett, and all new initiatives. We thank God for the religious freedom we enjoy and ask for courage and vision for sharing faith in new ways to meet our neighbours in the realities of their lives.
19. Church of the Good Shepherd, Furnham, Chard, in Interregnum: Churchwardens; Alison Cruikshank and David Davies. Cricket St Thomas: Canon Hugh Williams.
20. Good relationships and friendships in the Church and community; for Christ-like living in love and faith in matters of gender, sexuality and race, for healing in any who have been hurt or rejected, and for prayerful consideration of the Living in Love and Faith report.
21. Churchwardens and PCC members, in gratitude for all their generosity in service, for blessings and reward, and for patience and perseverance when responsibilities weigh heavy; Parish Treasurers and Deanery Treasurer Geoff Lucas in difficult economic times; Benefice Administrators.
22. Chard St Mary's and Cloverleaf Villages Benefice: Chard St Mary's, Combe St Nicholas and Ham, Wambrook, Whitestaunton. Revds Ann Kember and Georgina Vye. Readers: Ruth Rogers and Charles Sparey.
23. Young people, in the towns of Chard and Ilminster and in all villages, and for Tom Tame (Youth Pioneer) in his connections with many who may have no other contact with Christian faith and hope; for protection against all that threatens to harm young people.

24. Businesses and commerce in our two towns and in the villages where many work from home; for integrity and honest practice, and for the Chard regeneration project to sustain and create employment.
25. For all who are made redundant in hard times, facing hardship or the loss of their homes and losing hope of finding new work; Food Banks and Food Share; for each Church to find further meaningful ways to support families and individuals and to assist those who suffer poverty.
26. Family life in all generations, giving thanks for good relationships; children or adults who suffer misery or abuse at home; the lonely and housebound; the work of the Chard Hidden Voices group in counteracting modern day slavery. Lord, may your light of hope and truth shine in dark places.
27. Two Shires Benefice: Chaffcombe, Cricket Malherbie, Tatworth, Thorncombe, Winsham. Revds Philip Butcher and Judith Abbott. Readers: Mary Dewar and Diana Kershaw.
28. Children across the Deanery, and the schools they attend: the mission of Church schools in Buckland St Mary, Combe St Nicholas, Curry Mallet, Greenfylde Ilminster, Hatch Beauchamp, Ilton, Thorncombe, Thurlbear, Wadham in Crewkerne, Winsham.
29. All who suffer with mental illness and anxiety or loneliness, asking for the right kind of professional help where needed and for the healing love of God through friendships, faith and community support.
30. We give thanks for the saints of every age, the world-wide Christian Church and for our local brothers and sisters in other denominations in the Deanery. Together we are the Body of Christ and we pray for health, and united worship and Christian service.
31. Jesus, Son of the living God, we bring ourselves in our weaknesses and in the great goodness of the love you have poured into our lives. May we grow in faith and in all things seek your presence and your kindness. Amen.

