

## **Engaging with the St James' Church Year of Prayer**

### **Guide for individuals, families, small groups and specific prayer meetings**

Welcome to the St James' Church Year of Prayer. This prayer guide aims to support you as you pray and listen to God.

Please keep a note of anything God might say as you pray. If you have a word, picture, bible verse or anything that's encouraging and worth sharing, please email it to:

[yearofprayer@stjamesclitheroe.co.uk](mailto:yearofprayer@stjamesclitheroe.co.uk).

# Prayer points for everyone

During this Year of Prayer please pray for:

- A fresh move of the Holy Spirit in and through St James' Church
- Mark and Della as they transition to retirement and the next stages in life, family and ministry
- St James' Church in the season of vacancy, that we maintain unity, openness to His Spirit and an outward focus
- The Leadership Team, PCC and other teams, that we will have and give clear direction and an openness to the Holy Spirit throughout the process
  
- Jan/Feb: The shaping of the Parish Profile by a team through wider consultation
- Mar/Apr: The advertising process, that it will reach and attract the right person
- Apr/May: The short-listing and interview process, that all those involved will have clear direction to the person God is calling for the next stage in the life of St James' Church
- Jan to June: Identification and purchase of a suitable home to serve as a new Rectory
- June to Sept: The moving and settling in process for the new Rector
- Sept to Dec: Celebrating this new stage for St James' Church and praying for bonding together and joint vision for the Rector and congregation.

# Pray alone

2 Chronicles 7:14 says:

*If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*

- It may help to hold your hands out or kneel before the Lord while you pray.
- Spend time worshipping and thanking Father God for who he is
- Offer him your heart and your thoughts afresh, asking him to highlight anything you need to deal with in his presence (He knows your inmost thoughts)
- Ask for him to speak, spending time listening in silence
- Ask particularly for any words or scriptures relating to the current stage we are at in the vacancy process
- Ask the Holy Spirit to move in and through us, deepening our faith and helping our ministry to each other and to our communities to flourish
- Pray for Clitheroe and the area where you live, that God's Kingdom might break out in a new way
- Please also consider prayer walking around your home area, praying for Jesus to meet with those living and working there.

*LORD, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, LORD. Repeat them in Clitheroe and the surrounding area in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.*  
(Habakkuk 3 v 2)

## Pray as a family, household or small group

- Ask each member of the family/household/group to thank God for something that has happened this week
- Ask each member to thank Jesus for something that they really like about St James' Church
- Pray for Him to guide us through the process of calling a new Rector, and for the right person to hear and answer God's call
- Listen to anything God is saying, and share it through [yearofprayer@stjamesclitheroe.co.uk](mailto:yearofprayer@stjamesclitheroe.co.uk)

**Dreaming & imagining the future for St James' Church:** a prayer activity that you can repeat more than once:

*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we **ask or imagine**, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! (Eph 3:20,21)*

Take a moment to invite the Holy Spirit to come. Ask Him to guide this time and help you dream God's dreams for St James' Church, our parish and this area.

Turn your mind to the future. What are your dreams for St James' Church and our communities? How would you like it to look in one year's time, in five years, in ten years?

Be as specific as possible. You may find it helpful to divide your dreams and imaginings into a few different categories. We suggest these rough areas to think about:

- Church life together

- Discipleship, including e.g. preaching, small groups
- Worship
- Pastoral care
- Ministry to different age groups at all life stages
- Outreach and community involvement
- Supporting social justice and the persecuted church
- Becoming a more sustainable church and looking after creation (corporately and individually)

Write lists, make mind maps, draw pictures. What do you want church life to look like, this time next year?

Keep your lists/notes for future reference (we will be asking for feedback from listening to God at specific meeting in February),

## Pray together regularly

Throughout this Year of Prayer, two cornerstones of our corporate prayer will be meeting together to pray on:

- **Sunday evenings from 19:00 to 20:00**
- **Wednesday mornings from 09:45 to 10:15**

On weeks where ‘Without Borders’ worship is happening (usually the fourth Monday of the month), we won’t have a Sunday evening meeting, but encourage everyone to attend ‘Without Borders’, which will include an element of prayer.

The Sunday and Wednesday meetings will be a mix of lead prayer, individual prayer activities/spaces, and group prayer, and we’re

hoping that a wide range of people will be involved in facilitating these sessions.

One key element of these meetings is to be listening to the Holy Spirit, both about the vacancy process specifically but also about the whole life of the church, and what He is wanting to do in and through us.

## Prayer walking

We aim to walk our 'parish bounds' during the year, either in stages or as one longer walk. Please watch out for dates and further details.

Please also consider walking and praying around the streets in your own immediate area (whether in Clitheroe or another town/village).

## Yielding prayer (saying 'Yes' to God)

*Lord, I/we lay all these prayers and requests before You.*

*I/we ask that Your will would be done, for You always know what is best and Your timing is perfect.*

*I/we choose to trust in You - fill me/us with Your peace.*

*In Jesus' name.*

# Blackburn Diocese Prayer for Growth & Renewal

As well as a Year of Prayer for St James' Church, 2025 is a year of prayer for Blackburn Diocese, as it resets its vision for 2026 and beyond.

Please use the following prayer as part of your individual, family and group prayer, as we join in seeking God together with his wider family.

*God of Mission  
Who alone brings growth to your Church,*

*Send your Holy Spirit to give  
Vision to our planning,  
Wisdom to our actions,  
Joy to our worship,  
And power to our witness.*

*Help our church to grow in numbers,  
In spiritual commitment to you,  
And in service to our local community.*

*Through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen*



## Key dates in the vacancy process

### Retirement celebrations

- Sat 1 Feb All-Age Party, 17:00-20:00  
Sun 2 Feb Celebration Service, 10:30,  
followed by Bring & Share Lunch

### Open consultation meetings

*These consultation meetings are to feed into the Parish Profile, particularly about our vision for the future and what we are looking for in a new Rector*

- Wed 5 Feb 09:30-10:15  
Sun 9 Feb 12:30-13:30 (particularly for families)  
Mon 10 Feb 19:30-21:00 (Fast Day)

### Other key dates

- Sun 23 Feb Parish Profile to be submitted to Diocese  
Tues 11 Mar Vacancy advertised nationally (Fast Day)  
Tues 15 Apr Closing date for applications  
Wed 16 Apr Short-listing for interviews (Fast Day)  
Mon 12 May Interviews (Fast Day)  
Sun 25 May Announcement in parishes  
(if have appointed on 12<sup>th</sup>)

*Start date of new Rector to be confirmed following appointment.*

*On those days marked 'Fast Day' above, we encourage everyone to fast and pray in some form that day, whether it's missing one meal or more.*