

Summary Review of Diocesan Day of Prayer May 2026

On Wednesday and Thursday 6th-7th May people from across the diocese gathered in prayer to lift before God the life of Lichfield Diocese in so many of its forms. While mainly meeting virtually via zoom, St George's Frankwell in Shrewsbury proved a most accommodating base and at various points, people also gathered in person.

As the day drew to a close at 12noon on Thursday, after a delicious lunch provided by St George's, a number of people accompanied Bishop Sarah on a prayerful walk around the town centre of Shrewsbury, visiting numerous churches including 6 more of Lichfield Diocese (In visiting order: All Saints Castlefields, St Peter's Monkmoor, Shrewsbury Abbey, Holy Trinity Belle Vue, St Alkmund's Shrewsbury, and St Chad's Shrewsbury)

Photos and Videos of the conclusion of the day and the prayer walk are available at Lichfield Diocese's youtube channel; <https://youtu.be/d5rTuXjlcWU>.

Overall I believe there were at least 84 people gathering in prayer during the day, not counting people we prayed with in their churches on the prayer walk, or those taking part in the sessions on different platforms lead by Lichfield Cathedral and St Mary's Ellesmere.

Grappling with the welcome challenge of trying to include more people eager to pray, on this occasion we started at 10am on the Wednesday, thus making this 'Day' of Prayer 26 hours long rather than the customary 24!

Included in the sessions that took place, we had sessions specifically including;

- All 5 of the Marks of Mission (Telling, Teaching, Tending, Transforming, Treasuring).
- Our Overseas Links of Hyderabad, Matlosane, Melanesia, Nordkirche, and Q'Appelle.
- 18 of our 27 deaneries specifically (and the remaining 9 were all included in the graveyard shift – no deanery or church went unprayed-for).
- Other Initiatives: 34,000 New Disciples, Addiction, Chaplaincies and Chaplains, Children and Families Ministry, Community of Evangelists, Community of St Chad, Education, Encounter, Lichfield Cathedral, Mother's Union, Persecuted Church, Pioneering and Pioneers, Prayer with Images, Shallowford House, Staff, Strengthening Communities, Telford Minster, Vacancy in See, Vocations and Training, and Wardens and other Officers.
- And plenty more besides...

My thanks go out to everyone who supported the day, but especially to;

- Bishop Sarah: Who agreed to lead both the Opening and Closing Prayers for the day, did so in person from St George's, and then joined us in tramping the highways and byways of Shrewsbury.
- Discipleship Diva: Our 'Whole Life Discipleship Officer' Helen Emery was just one of the supportive faces during the day both online and in person – but I was especially grateful for her being the practical one to get me home at the end, when I 'may not have been at my very best'.
- Late Night Baristas: At exactly 11pm I received the following unexpected and VERY welcome message from a colleague '*Hey Richard, fancy a coffee? I've got one outside St George's if you'd like it 😊*'. Oh, I very much did – Simon Cartlidge, take a bow!

Travelling across Shropshire to keep me caffeinated! (He also then kept me company in person until midnight!)

- New Faces: Various good reasons meant that some very familiar prayerful contributors were unavailable this time, but they were all good enough to find or suggest other folk to very capably lead prayers in their stead. We also had some wonderful people volunteering themselves rather than being volunteered!
- Old Hands: But that didn't mean that there weren't any number of fantastic folk once again stepping up to lead and support sessions, many of whom have been supporting the DDOP far longer than I. (Including my wonderful predecessor Denise Keen, who remains as supportive as ever)
- Shrewsbury Sustenance: We received a warm welcome at various churches that we visited on the concluding prayer walk, but special thanks go to Diana and Steve at Shrewsbury Abbey for giving some weary travellers a very welcome pause and refreshment.
- Snapper Simon: As linked above, it was brilliant to have some of the day recorded for posterity, and it wouldn't have happened if Simon Jones hadn't been available to give up his time and skill. It was also lovely that as a former Shrewsbury man, he could legitimately contribute at various different places on the prayer walk.
- St George's: Who were simply delightful hosts. Thank you to all those from the regular congregation who came and supported the first two sessions, to their vicar Tim who found a way of making various sessions work in some hybrid form, and most especially their Administrator Judith who did all sorts of unseen things over the two days and beyond – without which, things simply wouldn't have happened.
- Wonderful Wendy: Once my corpulent frame could drag itself no further two thirds of the way round the concluding prayer walk, I could not have wished for a far superior guide to take it to its conclusion than the Abbey's Wendy Ford, keen walker and prayer extraordinaire!

Most of all, thank you to the most important audience of Father God, so that even when certain sessions may not have been numerically plentiful, the 'audience of one' was ever-attentive. Thank you Lord that you always hear our prayers, even if we can't always get the answers that we want.

The next Day of Prayer is earmarked for Wednesday – Thursday 21st – 22nd October 2026, and to be opened and closed by Bishop Matthew. Please do pop it in your diary now and join us. Next time the physical prayer base will be Shallowford House – exact practicalities to be confirmed, but you will be very welcome to join me in person for a session or three there. Or just as welcome to appear in the 'zoom room' 😊.

Richard Barrett
Day of Prayer Coordinator