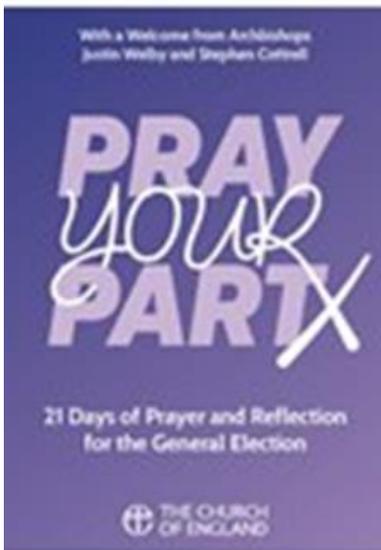


July 2024 Edition 101

They prayed . . . then they drew lots and the lot fell to Matthias.

(Acts 2:24,26)

Next week we shall, at last, know who has won the General Election, and who will be leading our country for the next five years.



It was only recently that I discovered that the Church of England has issued a booklet, 'Pray your Part', which encourages us to pray during the campaign, and although it is now too late to join in from the beginning, it seems to me that it's a good idea for us at St Mary's to be praying for our nation up until the Election and once the new government is in place. It is not too late to sign up for a daily email or, indeed, the booklet if you would like.

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This is an extract of what the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have written:

‘The coming General Election is critical moment in the life of our nation, which will shape our future. This is a time for us all to ask important questions about what kind of country we want to build.

The world and our nation face deep challenges – from questions of war and peace, poverty and injustice to the very future of the earth God has given us. Faced with such huge questions, our calling as Christians is to turn first to God in prayer.

We are therefore inviting everyone who is willing to dedicate the next few weeks as a time not just to think about the big questions, but also to pray for our nation and our world. We want to invite everyone to think about how we all can play our part both as voters and, more broadly, as citizens.

*In the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus teaches us to pray each day, ‘your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven’. This simple and profound prayer is our starting point during the days leading up to the General Election – **and all the days beyond**. May God’s will be done in our nation and in God’s world.*

Archbishop Justin Welby & Archbishop Stephen Cottrell’

Apart from praying for all the Candidates and Party Leaders, the suggested topics cover every aspect of our national life, with a Bible verse, reflection and a prayer for each day focusing on a particular issue, including:

Integrity, the Environment, Family Life, the Media, the NHS, Social Care, Housing, Education, Overseas Aid, Defence, Business and Trade, Migration, Work, Welfare, Prisons, the Justice System, Technology, Good Government.

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The Archbishops continue:

'As followers of Jesus, we should always be guided by what we see and understand to be God's purposes for the world. Whatever party we support, our vote is an expression of this.

In fact, the Bible urges us to pray for those who make difficult decisions on our behalf; who shoulder great burdens; who, we pray, will carry out their duty with integrity and compassion....

Anyone who points the finger at anyone else is always open to the charge of hypocrisy. But the truth is that everyone fails, and everyone has their inconsistencies. But that can't exempt us from the need to hold high expectations of one another. This is particularly true of those in public life to whom we entrust the leadership of our society.

It is right that citizens should expect integrity, honesty and humility of those who wield power over the lives of others. Perhaps the key word there is 'humility'. Holding others to account demands that we all face our own failure to live as we might wish.

And, as we rightly expect integrity in those engaged in public life, let's pray, too, that we may, in humility, hold ourselves to the same high standards.'

Whichever way we have each voted, whether we are happy with the result of the election, or somewhat apprehensive, or even angry, it must be good for all of us to pray for our nation, to give thanks for the freedoms we enjoy, and to entrust ourselves and our future to God, who holds all of us, whatever our political persuasion, in love.

Maggie Marsh

*Guide the leaders of the nations
that they may work for the common good,
and strengthen our hearts with a vision of your kingdom.
Hear us, good Lord.*

Vacancy Update



Due to unforeseen circumstances, the interviews will not now take place on 2nd July and the post will be re-advertised. The new timescale is not yet known.

July Services and Events

- | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Thursday 4 | 07 - 22 | General Election |
| Saturday 6 | 08.30 | Men's Breakfast at Horton Park Golf Club |
| Sunday 7 | 08.00 | Holy Communion (Common Prayer) |
| | 09.30 | Sung Communion and Children's Groups |
| Monday 8 | 19.30 | Knit & Natter Group in the Leverton Room |
| Sunday 14 | 09.30 | Sung Communion |
| Wednesday 17 | 20.00 | PCC Meeting in the Cuddington Hall |
| Thursday 18 | 14.30 | Afternoon Club in the Cuddington Hall |
| Friday 19 | 10.00 | Toddlers' Term Ends |
| Saturday 20 | 15.00 | Women's Group Summer Tea Party |
| Sunday 21 | 09.30 | Sung Communion |
| Sunday 28 | 09.30 | Sung Communion |
| Wednesday 31 | 19.15 | Men's Carvery at the Hogsmill Tavern |

Morning Prayer is said in church every weekday morning at 9am

Everyone is very welcome