



**St Agnes'**  
Longsight



**Prayer at**  
**St Agnes' Longsight**

# Welcome to Prayer

This short leaflet gives an introduction to prayer at St Agnes' Longsight and some thoughts on how to share in the prayer life of this parish.

## What is Prayer?

To put it simply, prayer is talking with God. It can be talking to God but like any conversation it is better when it is a two-way process. So prayer involves listening to God as much as it does talking. In fact it is in what we don't say, in the waiting, listening and the longing that we enter more deeply into prayer.

Prayer can be a private or a corporate activity. We can pray on our own or with others, at church or at home, on the bus or at work. We can pray for others or for ourselves and sometimes we ask other people to pray for us.

## How do we pray?

There are many ways to pray – and we use different ways at different times. We should not worry too much about words. Jesus reminds us that our heavenly Father knows what we want and need before we even think about saying it. We might try to use lots of words and perhaps we like to make neat sentences – be on our 'best behaviour' in this conversation with God! But ultimately words do not matter. God delights in our presence and is more interested in our desire to pray than he is in our words.

## Why do we pray?

Because God wants us to. Because Jesus encourages us to. Because we feel we ought to. Because we feel better when we do. Because we don't know what else to do. Because we want to. All these are typical answers and all of them are true. We also know that prayer is answered; prayer can change lives – not just our lives but also the lives of those we pray for. We may not always see the benefits but that is because it is God's will that is being done and not simply ours! In fact that is the main purpose of prayer and the greatest prayer of all – when words fail, the most important prayer is 'Thy will be done'.

# When YOU want to pray...



## Praying in St Agnes' Church

There are two main ways to pray in church apart from at the Eucharist:

**Evening Prayer** is said Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday in church at 5pm. It is a short 20 minute service of prayer, scripture and worship. As well as the more formal form of prayer there is also an opportunity for informal and personal prayer.

**Parish Prayers** take place once a month – usually on a Tuesday afternoon at 1pm. This is just thirty minutes of prayer and like Evening Prayer it takes place in the Sacrament Chapel in church – in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Sometimes those present pray out loud but often we sit in silent prayer and adoration. It is a gentle and powerful introduction to praying together.

## Praying at Home

As well as your own personal prayer time there are two ways which might help you feel part of a wider community of prayer when you are home.

**Evening Prayer at Home** – using the simple form of Evening Prayer supplied with this leaflet why not join in prayer at 5pm knowing that you are joining Christians the world over as well as in your own parish church?

**Prayer Trees** are a simple way of joining with other people in order to pray for a specific person or event. At an agreed time everyone on the prayer tree (6-10 people) prays in their own home for the same intention or person. A great way to feel part of the community of prayer.

# When you want to be prayed FOR...



## Being Prayed For at St Agnes'

We often pray for other people but it is one of the strengths of the Church that we are also prayed 'for' sometimes. This can be publicly or privately – these are just a few examples of how we pray for people at St Agnes':

### Public Prayer...

**At the Sunday Eucharist** is the most obvious way to pray for people. The list is compiled weekly and names are usually kept on the list for four weeks. Simple prayer request forms are available in church or speak to the clergy.

**At Evening Prayer** we pray for those who have more long-term needs and who have asked us to pray for them over a few months. Again prayer request forms are available in church or speak to the clergy.

### Private Prayers

**The Prayer Tree** enables people or situations to be prayed for by just a small group of people. Either speak to the clergy or to one of the Prayer Tree leaders and ask them to pray for your need.

**The Clergy** will be more than happy to receive your confidential prayer requests at any time and will pray for you or with you privately.

## And finally...

Did you know that each night at Evening Prayer we pray for the following:

- a person on the Parish Electoral Roll is prayed for each night
- a street within the parish of St Agnes'
- a parish within the Diocese of Manchester
- a diocese within the worldwide Anglican Communion

**Find out more about prayer: [www.stagneslongsight.org/prayer](http://www.stagneslongsight.org/prayer)**