

ST MARY'S
LOUGHTON
NOTHING
IS
IMPOSSIBLE
WITH
GOD

Prayer Ministry Team

Training Manual



Welcome and Thank You!

Welcome to training for the Prayer Ministry Team at St Mary's. Our vision is to see **Every Person, Every Place, Saturated with God.**



EVERY PERSON,
EVERY PLACE,
SATURATED
WITH GOD

Prayer ministry is essential to helping people come to Christ, be filled with His Spirit and grow in maturity as a disciple of Jesus.

We believe it is a privilege to be part of this ministry of prayer with others. It is not a task, duty or simply a 'rota' to be done, but a joy and a real honour to stand alongside people encountering God together. We hope we will never take it for granted that we can serve people in prayer as they are seeking God in different ways.

That is why we ask you to take this opportunity of praying with people very seriously and with a sense of high-calling and loving commitment. In that regard, I also want to sincerely thank you for your willingness to say 'yes' to this ministry. Thank you for your care, love, listening, attentiveness and for stepping out in praying for others.

I am very grateful to those each week who lead the prayer ministry team. Please always follow their guidance and instructions, as they seek to lead Sunday by Sunday.

- Val Minnerthey
- Matt Ayers
- Jeff Potter
- Julie Huff
- Peter Kennelly

As a team member, we ask that you come to the pre-service prayer meeting in the Prayer Room from 10:15-10:25am. This is a great opportunity to pray and be listening to God before the service. Also, we can listen for words of knowledge and hear anything on the heart of those leading or preaching that Sunday.

Biblical Basis for Prayer Ministry

In the Bible, the word ‘ministry’ means *service*.
“Ministry is meeting the needs of others based on God’s resources.” (John Wimber)

Following the example of Jesus

1. Jesus’ ministry (Luke 4:18-19, 38-44)
2. The kingdom of God is near (Matthew 4:17)
3. The 12 disciples, then also the 72 ministered (Luke 9 & 10)
4. The great commission – we are included! (Matthew 28:19)

Guidelines & values in prayer ministry

1. Loving people we pray for (Matthew 14:14)
2. Join in with what the Holy Spirit is doing (John 5:19)
3. Ask for the Holy Spirit to come (Matthew 7:7)
4. The Bible is our final authority (2 Tim 3:16)
We need to grow in knowing how to pray biblically for people. For example, 1 John 1:9 is our authority to know that we are cleansed when we confess our sins. We must make sure our prayers align with the Bible.
5. The dignity of the person we are praying for (John 8:1-11)
 - a. Healthy boundaries and confidentiality
 - b. No judgementalism
 - c. Avoid being over intense – be natural
 - d. Minister to same sex, when one to one.
 - e. Good hygiene / breath.
6. Healthy relationships and the body of Christ.
 - a. With those on the team and those we pray with.
 - b. Encourage people to keep receiving prayer and coming to church.

Practical steps for praying

Each Sunday, we will have a team leader and around 4-6 people on the team at a time. Please follow any guidance by the service leader as the approach sometimes varies. Ministry can happen at any time in the service. Even if you are not on the team that week, there may be a general call for more people to come forward to pray if the response is busy. Please come promptly when requested and where at all possible.

1. Introduce yourself as appropriate.
2. Ask what they would like prayer for.
 - a. What would you like God to do for you today?
 - b. What would you like me to pray for?
 - c. Have you ever given your life to Jesus?
 - d. Have you ever been filled with the Spirit?
3. Explain how you will pray and encourage them to relax.
4. You might need to offer very brief encouragement if they express fears, doubts, unbelief etc. Just offer gentle encouragement.
5. Ask if they are OK with you laying a hand on their shoulder. (2 Tim 1:6)
6. Pray!
 - a. Thank God for the person
 - b. Welcome the Holy Spirit – “Come, Holy Spirit”
 - c. Keep your eyes open so you can see any signs of what God is doing. For example, stillness, shaking, weeping etc.
 - d. Don’t use too many words and don’t pray advice – pray as you listen to God.
 - e. Be open to the Spirit giving simple words of knowledge.

- f. After a few minutes you can ask the person how they are doing or if they sense God doing anything.
 - g. Stop praying when you feel it is right. You don't need to pray for long. Always end the prayer with a blessing for the person.
7. After prayer
- a. You may give brief and simple advice, but only offered gently. Never be directive, such as "give up your job".
 - b. You may signpost people to other help they might like to consider such as counselling or a pastoral conversation with clergy etc.
 - c. Don't tell someone they have been healed or saved. They need to sense that for themselves.
 - d. Never tell someone to stop taking their medication.
 - e. Please ask for prayer yourself at the end of the session from another member of the team.

Leading Someone to Christ

Don't assume everyone is a Christian when they come for prayer, especially if you have not met them before. In that case, it is always good to ask a question such as; "May I ask, have you ever given your life to Christ?" If the answer is no. You can follow up with, "Would you like me to explain it to you?" You can explain the gospel simply, then ask them if they would like to become a Christian today. Let them know you would be happy to pray with them now.

Here are a few Bible verses to memorise that you can share with them:

- Romans 3:23 - All have sinned
- Romans 6:23 - Sin leads to eternal death
- Romans 5:8 - Jesus died to take your sins
- John 3:16 - God loves you
- John 1:12 - You can receive Jesus today
- Mark 1:15 - Time to repent and believe

If the person is not ready to become a Christian, don't force anything. You might like to talk through any presenting issues gently and encourage them to read the Bible or to begin to pray and seek God more or to explore the Christian faith in other ways.

If the person does want to become a Christian, just make sure they understand that in giving their life to Jesus, they are fully surrendering it to Him. They will need to live for Him from now on. There is a cost of following Jesus.

If they are hungry to go forward, invite them to pray with you line by line out loud. You pray a salvation prayer line by line that they repeat after you.

Something like this:

*Lord Jesus Christ, I come to You today.
I know I have sinned and need Your mercy.
Please forgive all my sin (be specific)
I now turn away from my sin and turn to Jesus.
I believe you died on the cross for me.
I believe you rose again and are alive today.
I gladly give my life to you now.
Thank you that you love me.
Please fill me with Your Holy Spirit now.
Thank you, Lord Jesus
Amen.*

After this prayer, you pray for them to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

It is important to offer follow up.

- Encourage them to keep coming to **church** and join a Life Group
- Encourage them to sign up for **Alpha** if that is happening
- Make sure they have a **Bible** and encourage them to read it and **pray**
- Encourage them to **tell someone** else before they leave church, what they have done.
- If possible, ask for their **contact details** so you or someone from church can follow up and encourage them. There are Contact Cards on the Welcome Desk. Please make sure one of the clergy has this card before you go home.

Praying for someone to be filled with the Holy Spirit

As above, please don't assume people are filled with the Holy Spirit already. See Ephesians 5:18 and Acts 19:2.

People may come forward recommitting their lives to Christ. In this context, ask them to confess any areas of sin to God and lead them in a prayer of recommitment, similar to the prayer above, but just not for the first time. Then pray from them to be filled with the Spirit.

The heart is simplicity, humility and asking. It is often good to ask them to pray, or to say "Tell God what you just told me."

- Place your hands out in front of you – receiving

- “Confess anything to God that is sinful”
- Ask them if you can place your hand on their shoulder.
- Encourage them to surrender everything to God. They are the active one in prayer, not you. You are there to support, not to do all the praying for them.
- “Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you now.”
- You can pray, “come Holy Spirit” quietly.
- You can also pray from them to receive various gifts of the Spirit such as prophecy, healing, tongues etc as you are led.
- Keep waiting in prayer. Keep your eyes open, watching for signs of God at work. This is a gentle time of waiting upon God. You can offer words of encouragement for them to keep asking.
- Ask them how they are doing, and if they would like to end the prayer time or keep going. Sometimes they might like to be left alone with God.
- Encourage them that people experience the Holy Spirit in different ways. Some very visible, others very quiet. Don’t worry about feeling emotional or even feeling nothing.

Sometimes there can be hinderances to receiving such as doubt, inadequacy, fear etc.

- Encourage them with scriptures such as Luke 11:9 “ask and it will be given to you...”
Encourage them to ask, wait and seek.

Praying for physical healing

The key to praying for healing is:

- **Love** – it's not about the spectacular. Compassion is vital. (Matt 14:14)
- **Simplicity** – Jesus was not complicated. Pray with gentle authority, "Knee, be healed in Jesus name." (See Mark 7:34 for an example). Jesus did not give us a healing manual. He prayed in lots of different ways, but never for long. He usually spoke to the issue or condition itself and commanded healing.
- **Faith** – faith is active. Ask them to do something simple they could not do before. No pressure at all.

Some healing is immediate

Some healing is partial or delayed (Mark 8:24-25)

Often there is no sign of healing at all.

- It's OK! We should be honest. Still leave the person by blessing them and encouraging them that God loves them and to keep praying.

Responding to evil

Sometimes in prayer there is a real battle with evil.

The Devil exists, but we calmly focus on Jesus and His authority to set people free.

People can come under demonic power in various ways:

- Fiery darts (Eph 6:16)
- Footholds (Eph 4:27)
- Strongholds (2 Cor 10:4-6) which can be a mixture of spiritual issues and also simple patterns of negative behaviour.
- Control by an evil spirit (Mark 9:16-20)

Never tell someone they have a demon. There are also important implications here for issues that can also present as poor mental health.

Most spiritual warfare is not very dramatic. First of all, lead the person to repentance and faith in Christ. This is the key to freedom. For issues that are perhaps more common, such as overcoming fear, simply encourage the person to seek to discern where the issue has its roots, then if necessary, repent of anything they have done that is sinful or forgive people as needed and pray from them to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

If you are unsure or feel out of your depth, don't hesitate to get help from the team leader or a clergy person. Sometimes there needs to be additional discernment and ministry.

Praying for inner healing and forgiveness

This is an area that requires care and sensitivity. You Don't be directive, but simply gently encourage. Forgiveness and inner healing can take time. It may not happen within one prayer session. Remember to signpost them to GP or counselling.

When the person has chosen to ask for help or to forgive and wants some support in prayer:

- Recognise the pain and hurt, and bring it to Jesus together.
- Don't try to fix the issue, just listen and invite God to come and bring healing and peace.
- For forgiveness; ask them to imagine the person they are forgiving and say something like; "NAME, I forgive you. I release you to God and bless you in Jesus name."

NOTES

- Ask them to repent of any unforgiveness and to confess it to God and receive His forgiveness and pray for them to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Safeguarding Concerns

If at any time, a disclosure is made to you, where anyone is in danger of harm, or a criminal offence has occurred or may occur; you must not keep it quiet. It is your responsibility to report it immediately to the clergy or Safeguarding Officer, who will ask you to write it down. You cannot keep legally confidentiality in these circumstances.

SAFEGUARDING CONTACT DETAILS

Parish safeguarding representative:

Michelle Stanesby

Mobile: 07921 297379

Email: safeguarding@stmarysloughton.com

Diocesan Duty Safeguarding Officer

(including out of hours)

Tel: 01245 294444

Email: safeguarding@chelmsford.anglican.org

If someone is in immediate danger call 999

Diocesan Assistant Safeguarding Manager:

Amanda Goh

Tel: 01245 294457

Email: agoh@chelmsford.anglican.org

Essex Social Services: 08456 037634

Out of hours: 0845 6061212

National Child Helplines: **Compass, Essex**

Childline: **0800 1111** **Domestic Abuse**

NSPCC: **0808 500 8000** **Helpline:**

0330 333 7 444

Creating a safe space to encounter God.

The tone and environment we set in the prayer time is so important. People we pray for need to feel safe, listened to, cared for and not judged. They are people seeking God.

We are not trying to ‘fix people’ in prayer. They are coming to God as the One who saves, heals, restores and sets free. Nothing comes from us, it is all from Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Please don’t feel you have to fix people. Just journey with them into God’s presence in prayer. Nothing is forced in prayer ministry.

We always keep our church values in mind in prayer ministry. These values are at the heart of how we pray for people.

-  ENCOUNTERING GOD
-  LIVING FOR THE KINGDOM
-  LOVING DEEPLY
-  SHARING JESUS

Concluding thoughts

1. **You are not alone** – you are part of a team. The team leaders do not pray with people, so they can be available to support you in any way they can or you might need.
2. **Have confidence** that God will use you powerfully.
3. Prayer Ministry is **not counselling** or therapy.
4. Remember to **signpost** people to other ministries in church. There is the Hope Centre Counselling Practice. Info is on the Welcome Desk. They will need to contact the number directly.
5. **Ask for help** whenever you need to.
6. Remember people are on a **journey** and not everything gets done within one prayer time. Be patient and loving.
7. If you have an amazing **testimony** from Prayer Ministry, please let the team leader or one of the clergy know.
8. If you think someone may need pastoral **follow up**, please let the team leader or clergy know.
9. **Encourage** others on the team
10. Come each time **expectant** to see God move in power.

Further reading: *Learning to Heal*, John Coles