

**Sunday 3rd – Saturday 9th December**

A prayer for the 1st Sunday in Advent: Almighty God, as your kingdom dawns, turn us from the darkness of sin to the light of holiness, that we may be ready to meet you in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. On Sunday 3rd December the monthly Youth Worship Night brings young people from across Harrogate to praise God together. We thank you for Hannah Ferguson, and others youth leaders from the local area who enable events like this to happen. Lord Jesus, be at work through this ministry, raising and equipping the next generation of disciples. Protect and guard young people, Father, from those that would seek to exploit or harm them. Thank you for the work of The Children’s Society. We ask that you give wisdom and resources to this charity, and to all making decisions about safeguarding, education and mental health support for our young people.

**Sunday 10th – Saturday 16th December**

A prayer for the 2nd Sunday in Advent: Almighty God, purify our hearts and minds, that when your Son Jesus Christ comes again as judge and saviour we may be ready to receive him, who is our Lord and our God. Give thanks this week for God’s wonderful Creation, for every living plant and creature, all giving praise to Him in diverse ways. Join in with Creation’s song, praising our great Creator, and asking for grace to live lightly and responsibly on God’s earth. Pray for decision-makers at COP28, for ambitious targets to be set and adhered to, as together we combat global warming. Father, we thank you for the St Mark’s Harrogate Clothes Bank, providing much-needed clothing to those in need in our town, and helping keep clothes out of landfill. Thank you for the many donations of good quality

clothes, and we pray for patience and strength for everyone in the team, as they serve customers and manage the warehouse. May your love, Lord, be shown and experienced through this project. May the luxury hampers given out this Christmas be a blessing to many families.

**Sunday 17th – Saturday 23rd December**

A prayer for the 3rd Sunday in Advent: God for whom we watch and wait, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son: give us courage to speak the truth, to hunger for justice, and to suffer for the cause of right, with Jesus Christ our Lord. Thank you, Lord, for the work of Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza, and for all the humanitarian work supported through the Diocese of Jerusalem. Give strength and courage to all working to bring relief, aid and medical care in such challenging and tragic circumstances. Bring your peace, and comfort to the bereaved, and healing to the injured. Prince of Peace, we cry out to you for mercy and peace in the Holy Land. There are many in our community who are lonely, sick or sad. Pray for all listed on the pastoral prayer list below, holding each one before the God who loves them with an everlasting love. Give thanks for Catherine Gibbin and her oversight of the pastoral care at St Mark’s. We ask God’s blessing on her and the family as Catherine moves on to a new job.

**Sunday 24th – Saturday 30th December**

A prayer for Christmas Eve: Almighty God, as we prepare with joy to celebrate the gift of the Christ-child, embrace the earth with your glory and be for us a living hope in Jesus Christ our Lord. As we celebrate God’s Word, Jesus, born as a vulnerable baby in Bethlehem, we join in this prayer from the Holy Land interceding for

peace in Israel & Gaza: O God of Justice and peace, we cry out to you in the midst of pain and trauma, of violence and fear which prevails in the Holy Land. Be with those who need you in these days of suffering. We pray for people of all faiths – Jews, Muslims and Christians and for all people of the land. While we pray to you, O Lord, for an end to violence and the establishment of peace, we also call for you to bring justice and equity to the peoples. Guide us into your kingdom where all people are treated with dignity and honour as your children for, to all of us, you are our Heavenly Father. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen. (A prayer from Archbishop Hosam, in Jerusalem)

**Sunday 31st Dec – Saturday 6th January 2024**

God in Trinity, eternal unity of perfect love: gather the nations to be one family, and draw us into your holy life through the birth of Emmanuel, our Lord Jesus Christ. At the end of a turbulent year, we thank you Father for your eternal nature, and your steadfast love towards us and all people. Give us renewed vision to see others as you see them, and to recognise and work for a world in which every person is valued equally. On 1st January, can you pray for God’s Creation, and for our journey to Net Zero at St Mark’s. Join others around the world in prayer: Pray and Fast for the Climate – Pray and Fast for the Climate

**Sunday 7th – Saturday 13th January**

A prayer for Epiphany: Creator of the heavens, who led the Magi by a star to worship the Christ-child: guide and sustain us, that we may find our journey’s end in Jesus Christ our Lord. Thank you, Father God, for all who lead, teach and preach at St Mark’s. We pray for your work in our leaders Mike and Liz, in Hannah, James, John, Olivia and indeed in all of us,

making us more like your son Jesus, asking you to set our hearts on fire with love for you, that we might make disciples and extend your kingdom here. We thank you for time with family and friends over the Christmas season. As students prepare to return to school, college or university, and as teachers return to work, we pray for your equipping of each one, in their studies and work, but also as they live as disciples of Jesus. Pray this week by name for children, young people or teachers you know.

We pray for the continuing needs of Anna; Anne-Marie; Marian; Christina; Chris; Helen; Will Howell; Andy and Frances Kershaw; Margaret Murrell; Iris Lindford-Myers; Mellon and Jeremy; Janet; Julie; Nancy; Barbara Shreeve; Susanne. We pray for those recently bereaved : Sarah Emsley, Sheila Wilson and the family and friends of April Jones.



## GIVING TO MISSION

At St Mark's we give 10% of our core income to support Christian mission at home and abroad. In addition, a substantial proportion of the Parish Share which we pay to our Diocese goes towards mission outside of our own area. We are thankful to be able to support so many gospel based, kingdom initiatives which are bringing light, hope and practical help to people across our town, nation and globe.

There are two easy ways in which you can give to St Mark's Church to help maintain this valuable work:

1. **Regular giving**
2. **One-off giving**

To find out more, download a form or make a one-off donation visit our website: [smch.org.uk/give](http://smch.org.uk/give) or call the church office on: **01423 544528** and we'll send you the information.

Every penny donated to us is spent in support of the mission and ministry of the church. Thank you.



## PRAYER DIARY

Advent and Christmas Prayer Diary December 2023

Please use this prayer diary to join with the St Mark's church family to pray together for our community and the wider world.

This month we are praying especially for:

Stewardship of God's Creation, and the UN Climate Change Conference, COP28, which runs from 30th Nov – 12th Dec in the United Arab Emirates. Sign up for daily prayer updates from Tearfund, one Christian agency which will be present at the Conference: [Pray with us - Tearfund](#)

The St Mark's Clothes Bank, a project that seeks to reduce waste and support low-income households with good quality used clothes.

The Children's Society, working with young people in North Yorkshire who are at risk of being drawn into County Lines. We are collecting money and praying for the work of The Children's Society at our Christingle Service on 3rd December.

Archbishops of Jerusalem & Canterbury Emergency Appeal for Diocese of Jerusalem. Some of the money from our Christmas collections will go towards the work of the Anglican-run al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza, and the Diocese of Jerusalem's ministries throughout the Holy Land.