



Letter from the Bishop of St Davids

Autumn 2026

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Over recent months I have found myself reflecting deeply on the teaching of Jesus concerning prayer. As clergy, and as those entrusted with the cure of souls, we know that prayer is not simply one aspect of ministry among many. Prayer is the very heart of ministry. Before Jesus called his disciples to act, he called them to pray. Before he sent them into the world, he gathered them into communion with the Father.

Throughout the Gospels we see Jesus regularly withdrawing to pray alone. We also see him praying with his disciples and teaching them to pray together. When the disciples asked, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1), Jesus did not teach them a private prayer beginning with "My Father"; he taught them a communal prayer beginning with **"Our Father"**. Prayer is both personal and corporate. It shapes the individual disciple, and it forms the community of faith.

As I reflect on our life together as a Diocese, I want to encourage, and indeed express my expectation, that clergy serving within our Local Ministry Areas should make every effort to meet regularly for prayer together. Where possible, I would also hope that Licensed Lay Ministers, Worship Leaders and others who share in leadership might join in this discipline.

This is not simply another meeting to add to already busy diaries. Rather, it is the foundation upon which all our meetings, plans, strategies and decisions should rest.

When we pray together, something holy happens. The ordinary concerns of ministry, maintenance, finance, planning, pastoral care, mission and outreach are lifted into the presence of God. The mundane is blessed and transformed. What might seem merely practical becomes sacred because it is offered to God in prayer.

The early Church understood this well. Following the Ascension, the disciples "all joined together constantly in prayer" (Acts 1:14). Likewise, the growing Church devoted itself to "the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). Shared prayer was not optional. It was part of the Church's essential life and witness.



When clergy and lay leaders pray together regularly, trust grows. Fellowship deepens. Mutual understanding develops. Common vision becomes clearer. We discover afresh that we are not independent ministers working alongside one another, but fellow labourers in the vineyard of Christ. Prayer opens channels of honest conversation and enables us to discern together the needs of our Local Ministry Areas under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The Psalmist writes, "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity" (Psalm 133:1). Unity is not achieved by structures alone, nor by shared projects. It is nurtured most deeply in shared prayer. There, before God, our ambitions are purified, our frustrations softened and our priorities reordered.

There is also a powerful witness in this practice. Our people need to know that their clergy and ministry leaders pray for them. They may never see every sermon prepared, every meeting attended or every pastoral visit undertaken, but when they know that their leaders pray for them, they gain confidence that they are being held before God with love and faithfulness.

Jesus himself promised, "Where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them" (Matthew 18:20). This is more than a comforting thought. It is a reminder that Christ is actively present when his people gather in prayer. Every prayer gathering becomes an opportunity to encounter the living Lord and to receive afresh his wisdom, grace and direction.

This leads me to two important questions which I encourage every minister to ask honestly and regularly:

How is my private prayer life?

How is my collaborative prayer life?

Both questions matter. Private prayer nourishes our personal relationship with Christ. It is where we lay before him our hopes, fears, burdens and joys. Without this secret place of communion, ministry can quickly become activity without spiritual depth.

Yet collaborative prayer matters too. Left to ourselves, we can become isolated. We can drift into carrying burdens alone. Gathering with colleagues and fellow ministers before God reminds us that ministry is shared and that none of us serves Christ alone.

The theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote in *Life Together*:

"The physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength to the believer."



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Bonhoeffer understood that Christian community is sustained not merely by working together but by praying together. Shared prayer creates the space in which Christ binds his people together in love.

Similarly, Bishop N. T. Wright reminds us that prayer is not escaping from the realities of the world but participating in God's work within it. As we pray together, we learn to discern God's purposes and align ourselves with his mission.

My prayer is that every Local Ministry Area will cultivate a culture where prayer is central, intentional and regular. Whether through morning prayer, online gatherings, monthly clergy prayer meetings or other suitable opportunities, let us intentionally gather before God. Let us be known first and foremost as people of prayer.

The challenges facing the Church today are significant. Yet the answer to those challenges will never be found solely in strategy, restructuring or resources. The Church has always been strongest when it has been most prayerful.

St Paul urges us to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17) and again encourages believers to be "faithful in prayer" (Romans 12:12). These words remain as urgent today as when they were first written.

Therefore, dear friends, let us recommit ourselves to the discipline of prayer: privately, faithfully and together. Let us pray for one another. Let us pray for our congregations. Let us pray for our communities. Let us pray for the growth of God's Kingdom throughout this Diocese.

As we do so, may the Holy Spirit deepen our fellowship, strengthen our trust, clarify our vision and renew our common purpose in the service of Christ.

With every blessing and assurance of my prayers,

"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful."
(Colossians 4:2)

"Nothing is more necessary than prayer; nothing is more fruitful."
St John Chrysostom.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Dorrien Davies" with a cross symbol to the left.

The Right Reverend Dorrien Davies,



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