

*The Sheffield Diocesan Advisory Group  
for Healing and Wholeness*

Healing  
and  
Wholeness  
Handbook



***The Sheffield Diocesan Advisory Group  
for Healing and Wholeness***

**The Bishop's Adviser in Healing and Wholeness is  
Revd Dr Louise Castle,**

working with a group of health professionals, mental health, hospital and hospice chaplains and experienced parish priests from various traditions.

Our aim is to encourage healing to be a central part of the ministry and mission of the Diocese and to resource safe healing practices.

**We offer help to parishes in exercising a healing ministry, recognising this looks different in each context. Our aim is to learn together and enable the sharing of ideas so please get in touch!**

**[Healing.ministry@sheffield.Anglican.org](mailto:Healing.ministry@sheffield.Anglican.org)**

## ***What is health?***

Modern definitions recognise that ‘health’ is more than the absence of disease and make a distinction between healing and cure. Healing is the process of becoming sound in body mind and spirit. Health is human flourishing that includes aspects of wholeness, resilience, and a sense of being in community with others.

Flourishing does not always depend on the state of our physical health. Healing is not just about getting better, it is about our state of mind, our relationships with others and with God.

*Theologian Jurgen Moltmann:*

*“True health is found in having the strength to live, the strength to suffer and the strength to die.”*

*“Health is not a condition of my body but the power of the soul to cope with the varying conditions of the body.”*



## ***Theological understanding of Health***

Healing and saving have the same word in biblical texts linking the saving mission of God to the healing and transforming of God's people. This most powerful ministry is about the **embodiment of God's grace**.

Jesus spent more than 70% of his ministry healing. He calls us to go out to preach the gospel and heal the sick.

Healing ministry is theology in action, it is missional and crosses boundaries. Christian healing ministry is central to our everyday core ministry, it seeks to relieve the hurts of those suffering and to bring them back into the community of people and God.

In 2013 Pope Francis tweeted: *Miracles happen. But prayer is needed! Prayer that is courageous, struggling and persevering, not prayer that is a mere formality.*

It is our response to Jesus, who said,

“Come to Me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ...”

and follows in the tradition expressed in the letter of James:

“If any of you are sick, they should call for the elders of the church, and the elders should pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord ...”

James 5:14

***Christian healing involves the whole person: body, mind, and spirit.***

- When Jesus healed the blind man, he anointed his eyes
- When he healed the paralysed man, he forgave his sins
- When he healed the woman of bleeding, he called her “daughter” and restored her to the community

***Christian healing involves the whole of creation including communities, institutions and the natural world.***

***There are many ways in which Christian ministry can bring healing: a Christian's healing ministry 'toolkit' includes:***

- Empathetic, prayerful listening
- Creative prayer
- Prayer without words
- Laying on hands and anointing
- Sacrament of confession
- Receiving Holy Communion
- Providing a safe environment
- Giving Time, space
- Being alongside people
- Active listening
- A calm human presence through which God's grace can flow
- Care for the environment

From time to time the Diocesan Healing and Wholeness Team offers training courses to help parishes develop these skills.

There are also resources and Guidelines for Good Practice in Christian Healing Ministry and training listed below and on our webpage.

*See the website and Diocesan news for training updates, or  
contact the Bishop's Advisor*

[Healing & Wholeness - The Diocese of Sheffield](#)

## ***Some Useful Prayers***

### ***\*Prayer at the Laying on of Hands.***

In the name of God and trusting in his might alone,  
receive Christ's healing touch to make you whole.  
May Christ bring you wholeness  
of body, mind and spirit,  
deliver you from every evil,  
and give you his peace. **Amen.**

### ***\*Words used when Anointing is administered***

N, I anoint you in the name of God who gives you life.  
Receive Christ's forgiveness, his healing and his love.  
May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ  
grant you the riches of his grace,  
his wholeness and his peace. **Amen.**

### ***\*A Short Form of Prayer over the Oil***

Lord, holy Father, giver of health and salvation,  
as your apostles anointed those who were sick and healed them,  
so continue the ministry of healing in your Church.  
Sanctify this oil, that those who are anointed with it  
may be freed from suffering and distress,  
find inward peace, and know the joy of your salvation,  
through your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

### **The Jesus Prayer**

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on me, a sinner

### ***The Hail Mary***

Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst  
women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our  
death. Amen.

\*Common Worship: Pastoral Services, material from which is included here,  
is copyright © [The Archbishops' Council](#) 2000, 2005 and published by [Church House Publishing](#)

## ***Other Prayers***

In our anxiety, you Lord  
In our pain, you Lord  
On our hopes, you Lord  
In those who will treat us, you Lord  
In our healing, you Lord  
In our peace of mind, you Lord;  
In our recovery, you Lord;  
In our families, you Lord;  
Only you, always You, faithfully you.

Circle me, Lord, with your loving presence,  
Keep fear without and calm within,  
Keep fear without and hope within,  
Keep fear without and love within,  
This day and always.  
Amen.

Blessed are you Lord, who heals the sick,  
Blessed are you Lord, who binds up wounds,  
Blessed are you Lord, whose care knows no end,  
Humble we look to you for safekeeping and salvation  
For there is no other in whom we can so confidently put our trust.

***Peter Graystone*** in “A World of Blessing” compiled by Geoffrey Duncan

### **A Blessing for someone with Alzheimer’s Disease**

Lord, we ask your blessing on this confused mind.

You know that he experiences and knowledge of a lifetime are locked away inside a complicated mechanism to which this disease has inappropriate keys.

Keep this troubled one safe in confusion, happy in forgetfulness, aware in lucidity and secure in the environment of constant care.

Where there is fear and anger surround (Name) with your peace.

When despair strikes, give him/her your glimmer of hope.

When there seems to be no response, probe deep into the apparent emptiness of the mind with the reassurance of your love.

And when everything seems hopeless and this disease has full control, we commit her/him to your eternal compassion and care.

***Marjorie Dobson*** in “A World of Blessing” compiled by Geoffrey Duncan

**See also the link to Church of England Liturgy in the Resources Section**

## ***Guidelines for Christian Healing***

The Church of England requires that all who offer this ministry should be adequately trained and informed.

Such training includes a sound and up to date knowledge of:

- Safeguarding practice and reporting protocol
- Training in listening skills
- Knowledge of and respect for medical professionals
- Prayerful preparation and regular supervision

*Guidelines for Christian Healing* can be found on the Diocesan website:

<http://www.stpeterscollege.org.uk//UserFiles/File/HandbookFinal v3.pdf>

## ***Guidelines for Good Practice in Christian Healing Ministry***

The House of Bishops' Guidelines should be the first point of reference for every parish. These are available on:

<https://www.sheffield.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/House-of-Bishops-guidelines-for-good-practice-in-the-healing-ministry.pdf>

The practical guidelines below have been gathered from various sources and supplement the House of Bishops' Guidelines.

### **1. Authority and accountability**

- (a) The House of Bishops' Guidelines should be followed.
- (b) PCCs must ensure that this ministry is only carried out with the knowledge and permission of the incumbent of the church or, in the case of vacancy, the Archdeacon.
- (c) Due training and authorisation should be given to those practicing this ministry.
- (d) Work with others in a team, meet often, pray together and be accountable to leaders.
- (e) Try, as far as possible, to be in partnership with the medical professions. It can be especially useful to have the advice of mental health specialists.

### **2. Safeguarding and confidentiality**

- (a) Safeguarding training is available on the Sheffield Diocesan website.

<https://www.sheffield.anglican.org/safeguarding>



- (b) Be trained to a minimum of Foundation (C1) level with regular updates and a full knowledge of local arrangements for reporting.
- (c) Ensure confidentiality but be aware that any criminal or illegal activity or any disclosure of potential harm to others will need to be disclosed to the safeguarding officer.

### 3. Safe recruiting

- (a) Safe recruiting is used for everyone. This should look at the emotional stability and prayer life as well as kindness and goodwill.
- (b) Safe recruiting training is available on the Diocesan website.

### 4. Training

- (a) Listening skills are worth updating regularly.
- (b) Unconscious bias awareness is recommended.
- (c) Domestic abuse awareness training is recommended.
- (d) Training in issues listed below is useful for awareness and to help the healing minister recognise where further help is needed. Knowing our boundaries and when to signpost to professional help is key.
  - (i) Mental health First Aid
  - (ii) Bereavement Counselling
  - (iii) Alcohol and substance abuse
  - (iv) Trauma informed Ministry
  - (v) Living in Love and Faith

### 5. Practical guidelines

#### (a) **The space**

- (i) Should be warm and easily accessible.
- (ii) Try to provide a place with open visibility so no one feels insecure.
- (iii) Nearby, well signposted toilets are desirable.

#### (b) **Personal Care**

- (i) You too are a child of God, and this ministry can be demanding, so personal prayer and the support of peers and/or a spiritual director must not be neglected.
- (ii) From time to time life presents us with different challenges which may mean you need to take a break from this ministry. Take care to receive God's healing for yourself, you are valuable.

- (iii) As a Minister of Christ take care of your appearance and personal hygiene.

**(c) At the time of ministry**

- (i) Work in pairs as far as is possible.
- (ii) Explain confidentiality rules.
- (iii) Be aware that cultural differences may give a different world view
- (iv) from your own.
- (v) Use clear, appropriate language. Be aware of the hard of hearing and those for whom English is not their first language. Consider whether formal or informal language is appropriate and avoid jargon and 'churchy' language.
- (vi) Ask open questions and avoid leading the person.
- (vii) Never challenge anyone's gender identity, sexuality or alternative faith.
- (viii) Beware of language that may give the impression that it is the person's fault that they are unwell, or that they do not have enough faith.
- (ix) Ask for permission to touch e.g. for laying on of hands.
- (x) Never offer quick fixes. Most often we do not know the result of the prayers, that is God's work.
- (xi) Never give promises or tell someone they are healed/cured.
- (xii) Never advise anyone to stop taking prescribed medicines.
- (xiii) Reassure the person of God's love and care, especially if they feel healing isn't happening.
- (xiv) Leave space for prayerful reflection and to listen to the voice of God. Silence is often useful.
- (xv) Know when and how to refer someone to another agency and only do so with their permission.
- (xvi) Always refer someone who talks of evil spirits or possession to a member of the clergy, or to the Diocesan Deliverance Ministry Team. To contact the team directly, please contact:  
[Mark.Brown@allsaintsecclesall.org.uk](mailto:Mark.Brown@allsaintsecclesall.org.uk) or Revd Harry Steele, Chaplain to the Bishop of Sheffield: [chaplain@bishopofsheffield.org.uk](mailto:chaplain@bishopofsheffield.org.uk)

## Resources

### Web-based

- The Church of England liturgy: [www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/wholeness-and-healing/](http://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/wholeness-and-healing/)
- House of Bishops Guidelines can be found on our webpage: at this link: <https://www.sheffield.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/House-of-Bishops-guidelines-for-good-practice-in-the-healing-ministry.pdf>
- Safeguarding information and training dates: [www.sheffield.anglican.org/safeguarding](http://www.sheffield.anglican.org/safeguarding)
- Health information and evidence based guidance: <https://www.nhs.uk/>
- Listening Skills : [www.sageandthymetraining.org.uk/](http://www.sageandthymetraining.org.uk/)
- Acorn Christian Healing: [www.acornchristian.org/](http://www.acornchristian.org/)
- Guild of Health and St Raphael: [www.gohealth.org.uk/](http://www.gohealth.org.uk/)
- Renew Wellbeing: [www.renewwellbeing.org.uk/](http://www.renewwellbeing.org.uk/)
- Sanctuary Mental Health Ministries: [www.sanctuarymentalhealth.org/uk](http://www.sanctuarymentalhealth.org/uk)
- safeTALK: Suicide Alertness For Everyone: various providers online
- Mental Health First Aid: various providers
- Mental health advice and support <https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/practice/>
- Guild of All Souls prayers page, and bereavement support section, including support agencies etc. <https://www.guildofallsouls.org.uk/prayers.html>  
<https://www.guildofallsouls.org.uk/bereavement-resources.html>
- Support for those recovering from trauma and also has great training resources for those seeking to support those recovering. <https://www.carolynspring.com/>  
<https://www.rethink.org/>
- Centring prayer/ lectio divina etc. <https://sheffieldflourish.co.uk/>

## Books

- A Time to Heal Handbook - The Development of Good Practice in the Healing Ministry, Archbishops' Council (printed on demand)
- Slow Down, Show Up and Pray: Simple Shared Habits to Renew Wellbeing in Our Local Communities Paperback, Ruth Rice– 8 Jan. 2021
- Prayers and Ideas for Healing Services, Ian Cowie Wild; Goose Publications 2001
- Healing – its Place in Evangelism, Edmund Wilbourne; Grove Booklets on Evangelism, 1988
- A World of Blessing, compiled by Geoffrey Duncan; Canterbury Press, 2000
- Praying for the Dawn: A resource book for the ministry of healing, Ruth Burgess & Kathy Galloway (eds); Wild Goose Publications, The Iona community 2000 reprinted 2007
- Healing Liturgies for the Seasons of life, Abigail Rian Evans; [www.wjkbooks.com](http://www.wjkbooks.com), 2004
- Sowing in Tears: How to Lament in a Church of Praise, Paul Bradbury; W 193 [www.grovebooks.co.uk](http://www.grovebooks.co.uk)

Finally, please note this is not an exhaustive list, but we hope it is helpful.