

Chaplains from a hospital and a hospice are to join the newly-confirmed Archbishop of York this weekend as he leads worship from York Minster for the Church of England's weekly online service.

The first service to be presided over at York Minster by Archbishop Stephen Cottrell will focus on prayer and the ‘startling, beautiful heart’ of the message of the Gospel of God’s unconditional love for us.

In his sermon, he will say “This is my first time presiding here in this magnificent building as Archbishop of York and it is a joy to be in this place where prayers have been said for 1,300 years,”.

The service will be broadcast from 9am on [the Church of England’s website](#), [Facebook page](#) and [YouTube channel](#).

The service will hear a reading from the Prophet Isaiah by Canon Linda Ali, Honorary Canon at York Minster and a reading from the Gospel of St Matthew, by Revd Abigail Davison, in which Jesus relates the Parable of the Sower.

Commenting on the Parable, the Archbishop will say in his sermon that the story shows how the Sower received a ‘most magnificent Harvest’ in spite of his errors.

He will say: “Jesus comes to us, not to reward the rewardable, not to love the loveable, he comes to us to bring us into relationship with God, to plant the seed which is his word, his life in our hearts, so that our lives might be fruitful – why? Because he loves us so much, that is the startling, beautiful heart of the Gospel story.”

He will add: “Prayer is what God does in us through the Holy Spirit, what we call prayer is just our response, however faltering, however uncertain.

“Whenever we open our hearts and our minds and our voices to God and tell God our hopes, tell God our fears, express to God our hopes and our love, then not only do we become people of prayer but we enter again into relationship with God.”

The Holy Communion service will hear reflections on prayer from Revd Rachel Bailes, Lead Chaplain at York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Revd Abi Davison, who is Spiritual Care Lead at St Leonards Hospice in York. Mark Rance, General Manager of Wydale Hall, the retreat centre for the Diocese of York will also speak about prayer during the pandemic.

Revd Rachel Bailes will say: “Prayer is vital to my daily life as a person and in my work as a hospital chaplain.

“Time and time again I’ve had to learn the lesson that I cannot rely on my own strength alone and that I need God’s resourcing each and every day.”

The service will include music from York Minster and St Martin-in-the Fields Church in London including: *I heard the Voice of Jesus say, Word of the Father, source of all things living* and *Will you come and follow me*.

- A special video has been released to introduce the 98th Archbishop of York to the Province of York. The film features contributions from Bishop Stephen, his wife Rebecca and church communities across the north of England. Watch it in full [on the Church of England website](#).
- Explore the full range of [online resources available](#) for Christians and people exploring faith to use.

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