

St Mary's Langley

Churchyard Prayer walk

Follow the directions in red to find the prayer points

Stand facing the main door of the church

- 1** Look at the doorway in front of you and think of it as the beginning of a journey. Some journeys are difficult to start, some are hard to continue, some we do with joy and celebration, some are routine. Whatever type of journey has brought you here today, you have arrived ready to start a new journey, a walk around this churchyard as many have done before you and many will do after you. The building is over 800 years old; it has changed, but always been a beacon of hope for the community in Langley, a sign that God is with us.

Look to the right of the doorway

- 2** This is the Swabey grave. The Swabeys were important in this area for founding schools. Pray for any schools and places of education in the area that you know. Pray for teachers, school staff and educators who live and work in Langley.

Move past the Swabey grave then over the path on the right to the large yew tree

- 3** This yew tree may be as much as 900 old and has seen all the history of this church. Over the years people have rested under it, admired it, sheltered under it and enjoyed the cool of its shade. Reflect on the many people through history who may have stopped here. The tree has been a constant in this graveyard though it too changes slowly as time goes by.

Walk down the path towards the lamppost but stop about half way there. Nearby is believed to be the grave of the Count of Lude.

- 4 The Count of Lude was a Huguenot fleeing from religious persecution in France. Pray for those who are refugees today, for those with no home or state, and for those struggling to find a place that they can settle and be accepted.

Continue down the path to the lamppost

- 5 This Victorian gas lamp no longer works but it reminds us what a blessing it is to have electricity and gas, clean water and sewage removal, emergency services and all the amenities we are used to. Give thanks for this and pray for all those who work in the service industries. Jesus said 'I am the light of the world'. How can you be light to those around you?

Turn right to head south towards Langley Road

- 6 The young tree on the left was planted in memory of Maurice Snapes; it symbolises hope for the future. Maurice and his family planted it knowing that they might never see it grow to maturity. Sometimes we can't see what our actions will develop into, but we can place ourselves in God's hands now, trusting him with our future.

Continue down this path until you get to the grave of Father Crawford on your right

- 7 Father Crawford was the first Roman Catholic priest in Langley but is buried here in the Church of England graveyard. This meant he could stay in Langley and it shows how the different churches can work together. Pray for those who give their lives in the service of others.

Turn round to see the Harvey enclosure surrounded by a brick wall

- 8 The Harveys were the Lord of the Manor. Pray for all levels of government: local, national and international.

Just to the south of the enclosure is the grave of Paul Nash

- 9** Paul Nash was a war artist. Reflect on the impact art has on your life. Pray for creative people and give thanks for their contribution to the lives of everyone.

Look just beyond the enclosure to the crab apple tree

- 10** This tree was planted in memory of Jim Allgrove, a horticulturist who was important to the nurseries in this area. Pray for protection of creation and for those involved in producing food – farmers, fishermen, and agriculturists. Jesus said 'I am the bread of life'. Give thanks for the food we have, both physical and spiritual.

Stand on the corner of the enclosure and look at the three fruit trees lined up

- 11** On the far left is a Mulberry tree, reminding us of the children's song; pray for children and young people in Langley. In the centre is a Quince, known for its fruitfulness; pray that your life may be fruitful. On the right is the Medlar, whose fruit is eaten when it starts to rot. This reminds us of the cycle of life, that in death there is new life and that everything has its place in God's creation.

Retrace your steps to the lamppost and look on the right side of the path

- 12** Here is the tree planted in 2012 for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Pray for the Queen and all she represents, for the Royal Family and for the Commonwealth.

Head north along the grass side path looking on the right

- 13** The large tree is a Cedar of Lebanon. It is evergreen, grows to a great size and lives a long time. Remember the Middle East and pray for peace there.

Look across to the corner of the churchyard where you can see several graves all the same

- 14** These are the Commonwealth War Graves. Pray for all those in the armed forces, for their families and the families of those killed or injured in action. Give thanks that we live in peace, but acknowledge that many people in the world do not. Pray for those involved in peace keeping or peace building, and for the work of the United Nations in providing a forum for nations to talk to one another.

Backtrack down the path to the junction and take the main tarmac path, stopping to look straight ahead at the Almshouses

- 15** The Almshouses were built for the poor of the parish and were first established in 1617. Pray for the poor, elderly, disadvantaged and sick, that our society may work to bring comfort and equality to everyone. Pray also for those who work in healthcare or social care, naming anyone we know working in this area.

Continue up the path and turn left just before the Almshouses gate, to walk back parallel to the road

- 16** This is the area used for the burial of ashes and as a Garden of Remembrance. Pray for the dead throughout the ages, giving thanks for their lives and the impact they may have had on us, that we may never know about. Pray that those who mourn will be comforted.

Continue down the path to the church front door, then turn your back on the church and look out

- 17** You can see the pub, houses and traffic going past. Pray for our community of Langley, for all who live and work here, or just pass through.