



Ministry of Wholeness and Healing in the Church of England

Central to God's concern for the world is the healing, restoration and reconciliation of human beings and creation with God. Healing includes the often closely interconnected dimensions of the physical, emotional, social and spiritual well-being of human beings and is integral to the good news of Jesus Christ. Such healing is manifested in various ways and through various means, including prayer, sacramental ministry and medicine. The Church is called to participate in Jesus' healing ministry in the power and agency of the Holy Spirit and in partnership with others.

Theological Introduction – Common Worship Pastoral Services: Service of Wholeness and Healing

Prayer and preparation. Those involved in this ministry should be prayerful, regularly practicing Christians who acknowledge his healing love and are willing to pray and listen for guidance in order to minister appropriately to others. Those receiving this ministry should be treated with the utmost dignity and respect. Those offering and receiving this ministry should be clear that no claim of cure or healing will be made without medical verification and that no blame or critique is ascribed whatever the outcome of this ministry. A clear explanation of how the ministry will take place will be given beforehand and consent gained.

Safeguarding. Those engaged in this ministry must have undertaken the relevant safeguarding training and if appropriate the relevant DBS checks, fully complying with the Church's safeguarding procedures and guidance in whatever setting.

Accountability and diocesan regulations. There should be clear lines of accountability for those offering the Healing ministry and awareness of current law as it applies to this ministry, e.g. GDPR, Health & Safety, informed consent. Those receiving this ministry should have access to a clear process of accountability and complaint as necessary, and all existing diocesan regulations should be followed.

Training. Those engaged in this ministry should receive appropriate training in this ministry and be kept up to date with developments and its ecumenical expressions. Healing team leaders must ensure that members have opportunities for training and a common understanding of good practice. Those receiving this ministry should be signposted to other resources and expertise as appropriate.

Competence and boundaries. Persons in this ministry should be aware of their personal limitations and ensure that they are properly prepared and fit to be involved. If fitness is doubtful or compromised or there is a conflict of interest, they should withdraw from ministering to others. Professional boundaries with health care professionals should be observed.

Personal conduct. The healing ministry is part of the message of the gospel; the personal conduct of everyone involved should encourage confidence in this ministry and not undermine it. Language, personal hygiene, general appearance, body language and touch (with consent) used by those ministering should be appropriate, considerate and courteous towards those receiving it. No-one should be ministered to against their will.

Healing Ministry	
This is a regular service of prayer for Wholeness and Healing with opportunities for individuals to come forward for prayer ministry (prayer with the Laying on of Hands) and anointing.	
	PCC Authorisation The type of activity needs to be specified. >
	Risk Assessment A question needs to be answered. >
	Insurance Cover A question needs to be answered. >
	Safer Recruitment A question needs to be answered. >
	DBS Checks A question needs to be answered. >
	Induction and Settling-In Period A question needs to be answered. >
	Safeguarding Training A question needs to be answered. >
	Ongoing Support and Oversight A question needs to be answered. >
	Safer Environment A question needs to be answered. >



Our own relationship with God and our church: As prayer ministers, we need to be pursuing our own relationship with God in worship, discipleship and prayer. We need to be committed to our church community, pursuing love and unity. We minister under the authority of the Incumbent and the PCC. We need to be willing to learn, and seeking our own healing of body, soul and spirit. These two questions are worth pondering before each healing service we are taking part in.

Ministering from a place of Wellness

Do I feel particularly vulnerable at the current time?

Do I feel I can share in this ministry (today) comfortably?

Ministering from a place of Healing and integrity (cf Matt 5.24)

Am I at peace with those with whom I shall minister today?

Are there unresolved tensions in my church relationships?

Preparing for the prayer encounter:

- Come prepared spiritually. We recommend prayer ministers arrive slightly early to gather and pray together prior to the service.
- Be aware of personal hygiene and appropriate dress. Avoid low cut tops or high leg shorts.
- Arrange prayer ministry to be in a public place, aside enough to be able to focus, public enough to be in view.
- Pray in pairs, with at least one of the same gender*

Other considerations

- Keep within/after service prayer ministry brief.
- Have some tissues to hand
- Give people personal space. In prayer ministry we often get close to people, especially if musical worship is also playing. If they step back a bit, they are probably indicating they prefer a bit more space.
- Some listening, but this is not counselling- that is a professional qualification. If a person would benefit from counselling, there are local NHS options and Christian counsellors can be found via www.acc-uk.org
- Oil- clergy will anoint with holy oil as required
- Do not offer medical opinions or give any medication advice. In particular, never tell someone to stop their mental health medication.
- If when praying for someone, you think more help is needed, advise them to speak to the Incumbent, or their doctor, as you think appropriate.
- Do not engage in deliverance ministry; this is deemed a specialised ministry within the Church of England. If something of this nature is suspected, then pray peace on the person and speak to your vicar who will refer them to the diocesan deliverance team.
- Do not pray to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity, even at their own request. However, general prayer and appropriate pastoral support should always be offered.



Healing Prayer Ministry in the Diocese of Blackburn

Equipping parish teams to offer Christ's compassion with confidence and care

The Diocese of Blackburn has long emphasised **healthy churches, flourishing communities, and confident disciples**. Healing prayer sits naturally within this vision: it is a gentle, pastoral ministry that helps people encounter Christ's restoring presence in body, mind, and spirit. Across Lancashire's diverse parishes — rural, urban, coastal, and post-industrial — healing ministry offers a way for churches to embody hope, tenderness, and wholeness.

Core Principles for Healing-Prayer Teams

- **Rooted in Christ** Healing ministry is not a specialist activity but part of the Church's everyday witness to the risen Christ who restores and renews.
- **Compassionate and safe** Teams listen well, pray gently, and uphold safeguarding and confidentiality at all times.
- **Local and relational** Healing prayer grows best in the familiar context of parish life, where people are known and cared for.
- **Team-based** Ministry is offered by trained pairs or small teams, reflecting the diocesan commitment to shared leadership and mutual support.
- **Non-pressured prayer** We pray faithfully and simply, trusting God for the outcome and timing.

Practical Guidelines for Parish Teams

- Ask permission before praying with anyone.
- Keep prayers short, calm, and centred on Jesus.
- Avoid diagnosing, advising, or interpreting symptoms.
- Offer blessing, peace, and reassurance.
- Conclude by commending the person to God's care and, where appropriate, signposting pastoral or medical support.

Recommended Easy-Read Books for Training Teams

Francis MacNutt – *Healing* Pastoral, clear, and confidence-building; ideal for new teams.

Agnes Sanford – *The Healing Light* Warm and devotional; helps teams understand the spiritual dynamics of prayer.

Ken Blue – *Authority to Heal* A simple biblical grounding for healing ministry in the New Testament.

John Wilkinson – *The Bible and Healing* Balanced and thoughtful; written by a medical doctor with deep biblical insight.

Further resources:

- A Time to Heal ([A time to heal : a report for the House of Bishops on the Healing Ministry : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive](#))
- Guild of Health and St. Raphael (gohealth.co.uk)
- Renew Wellbeing - where it's OK not to be OK (renewwellbeing.org.uk)
- Sanctuary Mental Health Ministries (sanctuarymentalhealth.org.uk)

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