

# St Edmundsbury Cathedral



## Sundays at the Cathedral Prayer for Healing and Wholeness

Each Sunday a member of the cathedral's ministry team will be at the Lady Chapel altar at the Cathedral's main 10 o'clock Choral Eucharist. They are available to you for prayer or anointing for healing and wholeness, either for yourself or for anyone for whom you are praying. If you would like personal prayer in this way, it will take place as everyone comes forward to receive Holy Communion in the service: just make your way to the Lady Chapel (to the right of the nave altar) after you have received Communion (or a blessing).

### **Healing in the church**

Healing is central to the life of the church, not least because the Christian faith has always understood our Lord Jesus Christ to be 'physician of our souls and bodies'. Jesus taught that healing and wholeness are one and the same. There's good reason for offering personal prayers for healing and wholeness during Communion, and in the Lady Chapel where the blessed sacrament is reserved: the Eucharist is the ultimate expression of God's peace-giving, life-giving, healing touch in our lives: the Eucharist makes present the love, and life, and light and healing of the Holy One of God: Christ in our midst. Jesus is the one who brings 'healing in his wings' – the healing and peace for which we all long.

### **Restoration and peace for our souls**

As such, this ministry of prayer for healing and wholeness is a Gospel imperative: there's no doubt in the New Testament that healing – in its widest sense – is central to Jesus' ministry – and to the ministry of the earliest Christians. This isn't just about physical healing (although there are many accounts of that in the New Testament), but it is also about bringing those who were isolated, lonely, bereaved and ostracized strength and joy and peace to go on. When 'healing' happens – whatever shape or form it takes – the Kingdom of God is breaking into our time and space. Inasmuch that God's Kingdom will only be fulfilled in the life 'beyond the veil', all healing is a foretaste of that final healing of resurrection life: death can – and must – also be part of the healing journey.

Thus it is not just about praying that the deep pain or ache, physical or spiritual, that's within will go away: rather healing can also be the deep peace and inner strength that Jesus gives to accept, understand and work with a particular situation in our lives without the bitterness or resentment which diminishes us.

### **Practicalities**

What happens at the Lady Chapel altar, if you choose to go there after you've received Communion, will be entirely up to you: maybe you'd like to receive the laying on of hands and anointing with oil for healing; maybe you want to pray into a particular problem that you're facing or for someone else; perhaps you want to pray for God's healing touch for someone who has lost their job, or have family problems, or illness. Personal matters – such as confidentiality – will, of course, be handled with the utmost care and sensitivity.

### **Further information**

Do think and pray about this ministry, which is an extension of what already happens once a month on a Tuesday lunchtime at the Cathedral. Prayers for healing and wholeness are but one extra dimension to the whole tapestry of our belonging together as a Christian family, all intertwined and giving expression to our prayer and concern for one another and the world and its peoples. If you have any questions do just talk with one of the cathedral's ministry team. Or if you'd like to read more about this, do visit the diocese's website ([cofesuffolk.org/prayer-and-spirituality](http://cofesuffolk.org/prayer-and-spirituality)) or the theological background on this ministry in the liturgical area of Church of England's website ([churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/wholeness-and-healing/wholeness-and-healing](http://churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/wholeness-and-healing/wholeness-and-healing))

