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Praying for peace: A study of visitors' prayers offered at Liverpool Cathedral

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Abstract

Prayer is often described as the most significant religious practice in Christian tradition and broadly-based social surveys highlight the extent of the practice of personal prayer among general populations. Previous research has also shown that intercessory prayer-requests left in open-access Christian contexts offer rich and diverse sources of primary material that can offer valuable insights into the conceptions, concerns and aspirations of the many visitors passing through these sacred places. Prayer-requests relating to 'peace' are a recurring theme in such prayers, and although studies have identified and started to describe prayers for 'peace', there has been no focused study of this area. Through an analysis of a sample of prayer requests posted on Liverpool Cathedral's online 'prayer wall', this study seeks to explore the conceptions, concerns and aspirations of these online visitors in relation to 'peace', and to begin a conversation about the contribution of any insights to academic research and to professional practice.

Keywords: prayer, prayer requests, peace, cathedrals, visitors, pandemic

Introduction

This research study was prepared for *Peace: A symposium* organised by Liverpool John Moores University and Liverpool Anglican Cathedral on 9 November 2021. The aim of the study was to examine more closely the presence of 'peace' within personal intercessory prayer requests left within an Anglican cathedral. The study coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic and the introduction of an online prayer wall at Liverpool Cathedral, which offered a rare opportunity to explore 'praying for peace' during a unique time of uncertainty and challenge. This research has been positioned within a wider research tradition concerned with personal intercessory prayer request content conducted by the author between 2008 and 2020, as well as the Coronavirus, Church and You Survey (conducted by Francis and Village in May 2020), which gathered data during the same period as the prayer request sample used in this study.

Over the past three decades, there has been a growing body of research concerned with the analysis of personal intercessory prayer content left in a variety of church-related contexts, including hospital chapels, churches (or shrines), and cathedrals, as well as prayers gathered on the street and online. Prayers left in hospital chapels have been studied in England (Hancocks & Lardner, 2007; ap Siôn & Nash, 2013; Collins, 2015; Langford, 2015) and the USA (Cadge & Daglian, 2008; Grossoehme,1996; Grossoehme et al., 2010, 2011); prayers left in churches (or shrines) have been studied in England (Brown & Burton, 2007; Burton, 2009, 2010; ap Siôn, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2020) and Germany (Lee, 2009; Schmied, 2002); prayers left in cathedrals have been studied in England (ap Siôn, 2015a, 2015b) and Wales (ap Siôn 2013, 2015c); one study examined prayers gathered by Anglican bishops on the streets of English cities (ap Siôn & Edwards, 2013) and two studies focussed on online church-related prayers (ap Siôn & Edwards 2012; ap Siôn, 2016). These studies have provided valuable information about people's prayers in intercessory contexts, drawing

on interpretive insights from a number of fields such as empirical theology, the psychology of religion, and sociology.

Prayer and place

Many Anglican cathedrals in England and Wales provide opportunities for visitors to write and leave prayer requests, often on prayer boards or trees, or in prayer books or boxes. Focusing on methodological approaches, the development of the ap Siôn Analytic Framework for Intercessory Prayer (apSAFIP) sought to create a 'conceptually sophisticated framework within which the prayers left by ordinary people within ordinary churches can be analysed and interpreted' (ap Siôn, 2007, pp. 203-204) with a view to enabling the replication of prayer request studies across a range of Christian contexts and places. The apSAFIP was tested using samples of prayer requests from cathedrals and churches in England and Wales, a hospital chapel, 'the street', as well as a major Church of England online prayer site (ap Siôn, 2015a, pp. 172-173). The apSAFIP enabled basic similarities and differences to be identified among prayer request samples, lending weight to the argument that 'place' influences prayer request content.

> The influence of place on the prayer request content has also been demonstrated through the differences among prayers left in various types of cathedral such as rural cathedral, shrine-focused cathedral, and inner-city cathedral …, and through the differences between prayers left in physical churches and cathedrals and prayers left on online prayer sites. (ap Siôn, 2018, p. 56)

In response to these findings, further research explored particular aspects of the relationship existing between personal prayer, place and space (ap Siôn, 2017, 2020). For example, an experimental study investigated whether shaping the physical space in which prayer requests were written had any effects on the prayer requests left in the Lady Chapel of a cathedral in Wales (ap Siôn, 2017). Results showed that after re-shaping space in the Lady Chapel

differences in prayer-request content were identifiable in the analyses of prayer request content over the four-year period of the experiment. Of particular note were the considerable shifts within intercessory prayer relationships:

> Those leaving prayers in 'space for prayer and reflection' and in the spiral-bound book were much more likely to recognise explicitly that they were in some kind of relationship with the cathedral community and other pray-ers who were also writing prayer requests. (ap Siôn, 2017, pp. 233-234)

Relationships form an inherent part of personal intercessory prayer request purpose and structure, and such studies may indicate that the shaping of prayer 'space' in relation to place has an influence on the perception and experience of these relationships.

Praying online

Being able to post personal intercessory prayer requests online is becoming an increasingly common phenomenon in the Anglican Church. Questions then arise concerning whether any differences are discernible between the online prayers and the physical prayers left in cathedrals and churches. Two related studies, employing the apSAFIP, have examined the content of intercessory prayers left on national Church of England online prayer sites (ap Siôn & Edwards 2012; ap Siôn, 2016). The findings showed a number of key differences between prayers left on the online prayer sites and the prayers left in three physical cathedral prayer contexts in all three foci comprising the analytic framework relating to who people prayed for, what people prayed for, and people's expected prayer outcomes.

Prayers for peace

Another cathedral study of prayer requests left in an Anglican cathedral in Wales explored how intercessory prayer content may provide a window into the ways in which prayer authors perceive God's activity in the world (ap Siôn, 2013). Using a modified version of the apSAFIP intention categories, the nature of the requests made by the prayer authors

positioned God as being active in the world in a range of ways, styling God as: Gift-bestower, Protector, Confidant/e, Revealer, Intermediary, Helper (general), Intervener, Strength-giver; and Comforter. Of these roles, God as 'Gift-bestower' was found most frequently among the prayers (18%) often in relation to 'family and friends', and to a lesser extent to wider, global concerns. In these prayers, where the nature of the gift requested was identified, 'peace' was one of the gifts cited as well as 'serenity', 'love', 'happiness', 'contentment', 'cooperation', 'mercy' and 'hope' (ap Siôn, 2013, pp.149-151). Other cathedral prayer request analyses using the original intention categories of the apSAFIP have also identified prayers for 'peace' as a feature of its 'general' category focusing on affective qualities and gifts (ap Sion, 2015a, p. 181), as well as being one of the affective qualities or gifts being requested in prayers for health and illness, death, growth, disaster or conflict (ap Sion, 2015b, p. 181), for example.

Prayer requests for 'peace' have also been regularly noted by other researchers analysing this type of prayer in different locations, such as hospital chapels (for example, Hancocks & Lardner, 2007, pp. 17-18; Collins, 2015, p.199).

Personal prayer, spiritual awakening and the pandemic

The findings of the *Coronavirus, Church & You Survey* launched in the *Church Times* on 8 May 2020 made a major contribution to identifying people's church-related experiences during the pandemic from the perspective of both those receiving ministry and those giving ministry (Village & Francis, 2020). The Lewis Index of Spiritual Awakening (LISA) was included in this survey, and Francis, Village, and Lewis (2022) found that during early lockdown, although the pandemic challenged the faith of some churchgoers, more respondents experienced a sense of 'spiritual awakening' rather than 'spiritual decline'. This 'spiritual awakening' was correlated with active participation in online services, for example, lighting candles (12%) and writing prayer requests (6%), as well as religious identity and theological tradition.

Research agenda

Although studies have examined and mapped personal intercessory prayer content in a variety of organised church and cathedral contexts (and in the process, exposed the shaping power of place), there has been no specific study of the prayers for peace within them. Moreover, signs of the continued presence, persistence and relevance of personal intercessory prayer requests in church life during the Covid-19 pandemic provide a unique opportunity to explore the content of such prayers in more nuanced ways. In response to these observations, three guiding research questions are of particular interest:

- How did the pandemic influence prayer request content?

- What can we learn about prayer authors' conceptions, concerns and aspirations in relation to 'peace' during the pandemic?

- Are there any insights that may initiate conversations of relevance to professional practice and academic research?

To explore these questions, Liverpool Anglican Cathedral was able to offer the stable research environment of a single place of worship, which had the benefit of continuity in personal intercessory prayer request provision over the study period.

Liverpool Anglican Cathedral

In terms of sheer physical size, Liverpool Cathedral is the largest in the UK, and it is modern, built in Gothic style. The building of the Cathedral began before World War 1 and was completed in 1978. It stands at the highest part of the city and is visible from nearly everywhere. It has a close relationship with the local area and people; it was funded and built by the people of Liverpool, and a strong sense of ownership is claimed.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the Cathedral received around 800,000 annual visitors. It also had a well-established practice of offering visitors the opportunity to leave

physical written prayers requests in a prayer box in the north aisle. These physical prayers were incorporated into the Cathedral's weekly services, where they were prayed.

When church and cathedral buildings were closed to the public with the first lockdown in March 2020, Liverpool Anglican Cathedral quickly provided online worship and other provision, including the facility of submitting online prayer requests through its website. This new initiative was called the 'prayer wall'. The brief text on the online prayer request page changed a number of times over the pandemic, as it made connections with people and place and the practice of personal prayer. For example, in one version of the web page, the prayer request form read:

> We know so many of you like to visit and light a candle for a loved one. We're sorry that you cannot do that at the moment. Our clergy will pray for you, send in your prayer requests below.
>
> We will keep the candles ready. #WaitingToWelcomeYouBack #VisitLiverpool
>
> [This was followed by a request for first and last name, email address, and prayer request box.]

Throughout the study period (29 March 2020 to 30 June 2021), the Cathedral followed a similar pattern of opening followed by lockdowns experienced by the rest of the country, and the Cathedral's personal prayer request provision was available only online. However, on 17 May 2021, when the Cathedral was fully open to visitors again, other personal prayer opportunities were provided, which connected to the online prayer wall. For example, the illuminated 'Memory Trees' and the 'Peace Dove' reflective area in the Memorial Chapel, which both focused on remembering, had PR codes to the Cathedral's virtual prayer wall.

Method

Sample

The online intercessory prayer sample from Liverpool Anglican Cathedral covered a 15-month period from 30 March 2020 to 30 June 2021. During this period, 296 online prayers were submitted via the Cathedral's 'Prayer Wall' within which 372 separate prayer requests were identified. In addition to the prayer requests, conversation records with the Canon for Mission and Faith Development at the Cathedral were kept, which provided contemporaneous contextual insights into this area of the cathedral's ministry.

Analysis

There were two strands in the analysis of the prayer requests. The first strand sought to provide a broad picture of the Cathedral's early Covid online prayer content through: establishing prayer frequency; applying the ap Siôn Analytical Framework for Intercessory Prayer (apSAFIP) and comparing the results with previous online prayer studies (ap Siôn & Edwards, 2012; ap Siôn, 2016); and identifying any discrete 'emerging' themes. After placing the prayer requests within the broader picture, the second strand employed content analysis to identify and explore prayers concerned with 'peace'.

Strand one: Prayer frequency and the apSAFIP analysis

To establish prayer frequency, the number of prayers posted on the online prayer wall was recorded on a monthly basis over the 15-month study period. The number of prayers was then compared with the average number of physical written prayers left in the Cathedral over a comparable pre-Covid period.

The ap Siôn Analytical Framework for Intercessory Prayer (apSAFIP; ap Siôn, 2015a) was applied to the 372 separate prayer requests. These results were then compared with two previous Anglican online prayer studies, which used the apSAFIP model to analyse the prayer requests left on Church of England prayer platforms. These platforms differed from the Liverpool Cathedral prayer wall insofar as they were entirely online phenomena, with no

relationship with any particular church or cathedral. The apSAFIP model distinguishes

between three elements defined as prayer intention, prayer reference, and prayer objective.

Prayer intention distinguishes among eleven key areas with which individual authors

are concerned: health and illness, death, growth, work, relationships, conflict or disaster,

sport or recreation, travel, housing, open intention, and general. As a broad guide the

intention categories may exhibit the following features. 'Health and illness' includes prayers

for physical and mental illness, addiction, pregnancy and birth, and continued good health.

'Death' includes prayers for people who have died and their families, and also long life.

'Growth' includes prayers for spiritual, religious, moral (that is, non-physical or material)

growth. 'Work' includes prayers for jobs-related issues, education (such as school or

university), exams or tests, unemployment, money, and legal cases. 'Relationships' includes

prayers for partners and partnerships, explicit wider relationship concerns, as well as lack of

relationships and loneliness. 'Conflict or disaster' includes prayers for wars, disasters,

accidents, poverty, and the natural environment. 'Sport or recreation' includes prayers for

sport-related issues, hobbies and other recreational interests. 'Travel' includes prayers for

holidays and travelling away from home, and transport. 'Housing' includes prayers for

moving home, housing concerns, and lack of home (homelessness). 'Open intention' includes

prayers that indicate the recipient for the prayer but include no other contextualising

information. 'General' includes prayers that either have an affective intention only, without

any concrete intention or are too non-specific to be placed in any other 'intention' category.

Prayer reference distinguished among four key foci with which the individual authors

were concerned: self (the prayer author), other people (friends, family and others known to

the prayer author), animals (companion animals known to the prayer author), and the world

or global context (people, animals, the natural world, events, for example, which have a

wider global reference point beyond the personal and local community).

Prayer objective distinguished between two effects that the individual authors envisaged as a consequence of their petitionary prayers: primary control (where desired outcomes of the request were stated) and secondary control (where no desired outcomes were stated). The primary control component of prayer objective was further delineated between prayer authors who requested material changes to the physical world and those who requested affective changes. The former was labelled primary control one (PC1) and the latter was labelled primary control two (PC2). Secondary control was referred to as SC.

Identifying 'emerging' themes: While reading through the prayer requests, it was recognised that a number of themes were appearing regularly within the prayer requests. These themes were recorded and described within the groups of: 'coronavirus', 'place', 'pastoral relations' and 'prayer updates'.

Strand two: Prayers concerned with peace

Content analysis was used to identify 'prayers for peace' within the prayer requests. Although it is possible to conceptualise 'peace' psychologically and theologically in a variety of ways, this study attempted to stay as closely as possible to the word 'peace' and directly connected words or expressions. At the same time, other regularly used affective words were noted in order to gain a sense of the place of 'peace' among them.

Results

Prayer frequency

Graph 1 presents the distribution of the 296 online prayers over the 15-month period. In 2021, there was a noticeable increase in the number of prayers being submitted, reaching a peak of 65 prayers in the month of June. It is interesting to note that before the pandemic up to 400 written physical prayers per month were being left in the Cathedral. These figures may indicate differences in the online prayer population. For example, people writing online prayers during that challenging time may have been those who were more active in seeking

them out, alongside other spiritual support being provided by the Cathedral. Before the

pandemic, simply visiting the Cathedral could prompt the writing of a prayer request among

other activities, whether that had been the intention of the visit or not.

- insert graph 1 about here -

The apSAFIP analyses

The apSAFIP analyses interpreted the prayer request content according to the three notions

of: prayer reference, prayer intention and prayer objective, which were then compared with

earlier Anglican online prayer studies (ap Siôn & Edwards, 2012; ap Siôn, 2016). In terms of

'prayer reference' (who people were praying for), the Liverpool Cathedral online prayers had

a high number of requests for 'other people' known to the prayer author and relatively few

requests for the prayer authors themselves (table 1). This is very different from the two earlier

online studies, and in this respect, the Liverpool Cathedral online prayers had much more in

common with the physical prayers in other cathedral studies employing the apSAFIP (ap

Siôn, 2016, p. 88).

- insert table 1 about here -

In terms of 'prayer intention' (what people were praying for), the Liverpool Cathedral

online prayers were dominated by requests concerned with 'illness' and 'death' (table 2).

Again, this is very different from the two earlier online studies, in which 'relationships',

'growth' and 'work' featured prominently alongside 'illness', and in which 'death' rarely

appeared. The frequency of Liverpool Cathedral online prayers relating to 'illness' and

'death' were also considerably higher than that found in the physical prayer requests for other

cathedral studies employing the apSAFIP (ap Siôn, 2016, p. 87). Although it may not be

surprising that 'illness' and 'death' were present in this way at a time of pandemic, it

indicates the kind of spiritual support that people were particularly seeking and their main

concerns during this period.

- insert table 2 about here -

In terms of 'prayer objective' (the prayer outcomes people were requesting), for

Liverpool Cathedral online prayers 56% of the requests articulated a desired outcome

('primary control'), while 44% were left open, leaving the outcome in the hands of another

('secondary control') (table 3). Again, this is very different from the two earlier online

studies, which displayed greater preference for primary control. The Liverpool Cathedral

online prayers had more in common with the physical prayers in other cathedral studies

employing the apSAFIP, where secondary control was a more frequent feature (ap Siôn,

2016, p. 88).

- insert table 3 about here -

The apSAFIP results reveal certain distinctive characteristics in the Liverpool

Cathedral online prayer requests during the pandemic, but they also suggest that these

cathedral online prayers were more reflective of the physical prayer requests in cathedrals

than those posted on the entirely virtual prayer platforms created through Church of England

online prayer initiatives. This raises questions about the influence of 'place' on prayer

requests, and how online prayers closely connected with physical 'place' may encourage

particular kinds of prayer relationship and expression.

Identifying 'emerging' themes

The emerging themes found in the 296 online prayers were: 'coronavirus', 'place', 'pastoral

relations' and 'prayer updates'. For 'coronavirus', 61 prayers (21%) referred to the pandemic

explicitly, which situated at least a fifth of the prayers unambiguously within this period.

For 'place', 91 prayers (31%) made some explicit reference to Liverpool Cathedral or

demonstrated a connection with the city or its surrounds, meaning that almost one third of the

prayers revealed a direct relationship existing between the pray-er and place. For 'pastoral

relations', 63 prayers (21%) referred to some explicit pastoral activity on the part of the cathedral, which was either recognised as 'going on' or directly experienced by the pray-er. For 'prayer updates', 11 prayers (4%) contained an update on a current prayer concern, by either the pray-ers themselves or by a member of cathedral staff. These emerging themes support an understanding that these online prayers were very much coloured by and written in a time of pandemic, and explicitly reveal the variety of relationships with local place and people as well as insights into the nature of pastoral relationships between pray-ers and the Cathedral.

Prayers for peace

The broad picture of the Cathedral's early Covid online prayer content provides an important wider context in which to view the 'prayers for peace' present within the sample. The content analysis of the 296 prayers identified words or expressions most directly related to the word 'peace', which were styled as 'positive peace prayers' and 'negative peace prayers'.

The positive peace prayers all included the word 'peace' or a closely-related word or expression, and these were found in 61 (21%) of the 296 prayers and occurred 82 times. RIP, rest in peace, or eternal rest were used 47 times, followed by peace occurring 29 times. Other positive peace words were found less frequently: calm (2); serenity (2) prayers; and harmony (2).

Most of these positive peace prayers were concerned with praying for people who had died (47), and this emphasis increases further when twelve of the 29 uses of the word 'peace' were also placed in the context of death. All other cases of 'peace' were in single figures and concerned peace as a general personal hope for life; peace in a family relationship; global/world peace; and peace in 'hard times'. 'Calm' was requested for troubled and anxious states. 'Serenity' was requested as one of a list of desired attributes, which included wisdom, guidance, strength and health. It was also requested for difficult and uncertain times,

accompanied by a hope that these times would help people view life and the world in a different way. Finally, 'harmony' was requested in a relationship context as well as 'harmony' with the natural world.

The negative peace prayers all referred to either troubled, emotional states and mental health or to (usually) terminal physical illnesses. Negative peace, therefore, was understood as the absence of peace, and this was found in 15 (5%) of the prayers. Relevant words in negative peace included: anxiety, stress, worry, concern, and upset. On one third of occasions, these words were used in conjunction with one of the positive peace words.

Finally, other popular affective requests were also recorded within the whole sample of 296 prayers. This demonstrated that 'peace' was only one affective request among many in the Cathedral's online prayer requests. Other affective requests articulated by pray-ers included: strength, courage, protection, care, keep safe, look after, wisdom, revelation, guidance, happiness, truth, justice, love, hope, mercy, faith, forgiveness, and comfort. Both the words used and the variety were also found in the Cathedral prayer request study examining the activity of God (ap Siôn, 2013).

Conclusion

This study of prayer requests, posted on the online prayer wall at Liverpool Cathedral over a 15-month period between March 2020 and June 2021, offers valuable insights into the conceptions, concerns and aspirations of the pray-ers during the uniquely challenging period of the Covid-19 pandemic. The guiding research questions framing the study asked: How did the pandemic influence prayer request content?; What can we learn about prayer authors' conceptions, concerns and aspirations in relation to 'peace' during the pandemic?; and, Are there any insights that may initiate conversations of relevance to professional practice and academic research?

Placing the current study within the body of research created by the apSAFIP prayer request studies, and with the support of findings emerging from additional content analyses relevant to this this particular sample of prayers, a number of observations and conclusions are drawn.

The Liverpool Cathedral online prayer requests can be described as 'individual' and 'located' in a number of ways. First, despite being online, physical 'place' featured prominently. The pray-ers regularly articulated their various connections with place, and the relationship between the physical cathedral and the online prayer wall was often evident in their prayers. This was in stark contrast to the entirely online Church of England prayer request platforms that were the subject of study in previous research cited; those platforms had no specific connections with any place, although they could have acted as a portal to connecting with the Anglican Church. Secondly, clearly articulated pastoral relationships were being identified and expressed through the prayers and updates relating to the prayer concern were shared. This feature again embeds the prayers within a specific physical place. Thirdly, these prayer requests were written in the early days of the pandemic, a time of great uncertainty and change before the roll out of mass vaccinations. The heavy weighting of prayers focusing on people who had died or who were ill locate the prayers firmly within a specific moment in history.

This finding supports and builds on the apSAFIP body of research (previously cited) which has established that 'place' influences prayer request content. What is unusual in the context of the current study is the extent to which 'place' featured so strongly through an online prayer platform. The findings may well be influenced by a number of factors: for example, the extreme needs of people seeking spiritual support during the pandemic and turning towards a place with which they had some kind of connection; the carefully constructed prayer wall, which made explicit connections between pray-er, place and people;

and the high level of pastoral response to the prayers posted on the prayer wall. In addition,

the importance of 'relationships' in personal intercessory prayer was identified in the

introduction to this study alongside the effect that shaping 'space' may have on this. In

certain ways, it may be argued that 'space' (more broadly conceived) was shaped by

Liverpool Cathedral and this shaping influenced the perception and experience of

relationships within this intercessory prayer context. This could also explain why the

Liverpool Cathedral online prayers were more similar to the physical prayer requests left in

cathedral buildings than to other online prayer studies in the apSAFIP analyses.

    For the first time in prayer request studies, 'peace' has been a subject of proper focus.

For these pray-ers, 'peace' was an experience most crucial for those who had departed (or

were about to depart) this life. Given the weighting of prayers concerned with death and

illness, it is perhaps not surprising to find 'prayers for peace' primarily within these prayers.

For the living, however, other affective attributes were being requested, rather than peace; for

example, protection, strength, courage, hope, love, blessing, mercy. This may reflect the

perceived qualities needed to cope in the various experiences of struggle and challenge

inherent in human life, especially during the pandemic. In this respect, the Cathedral offered

a place and space where such concerns and aspirations could be expressed and requested

during a very challenging and stressful time.

    Finally, this study provides further support of the value of qualitative researchers

replicating their studies. It is argued that such 'replications' may strengthen the weight of

some kinds of qualitative findings as well as revealing new insights that otherwise would not

be discovered. This study also begins a serious and grounded consideration of the relationship

between online prayer platforms and physical place. Cathedrals are well placed to lead in this

conversation with the benefits of their significant presence in the landscape, history and

culture of England and Wales, as well as their access to the resources and relative stability

required.

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Graph 1

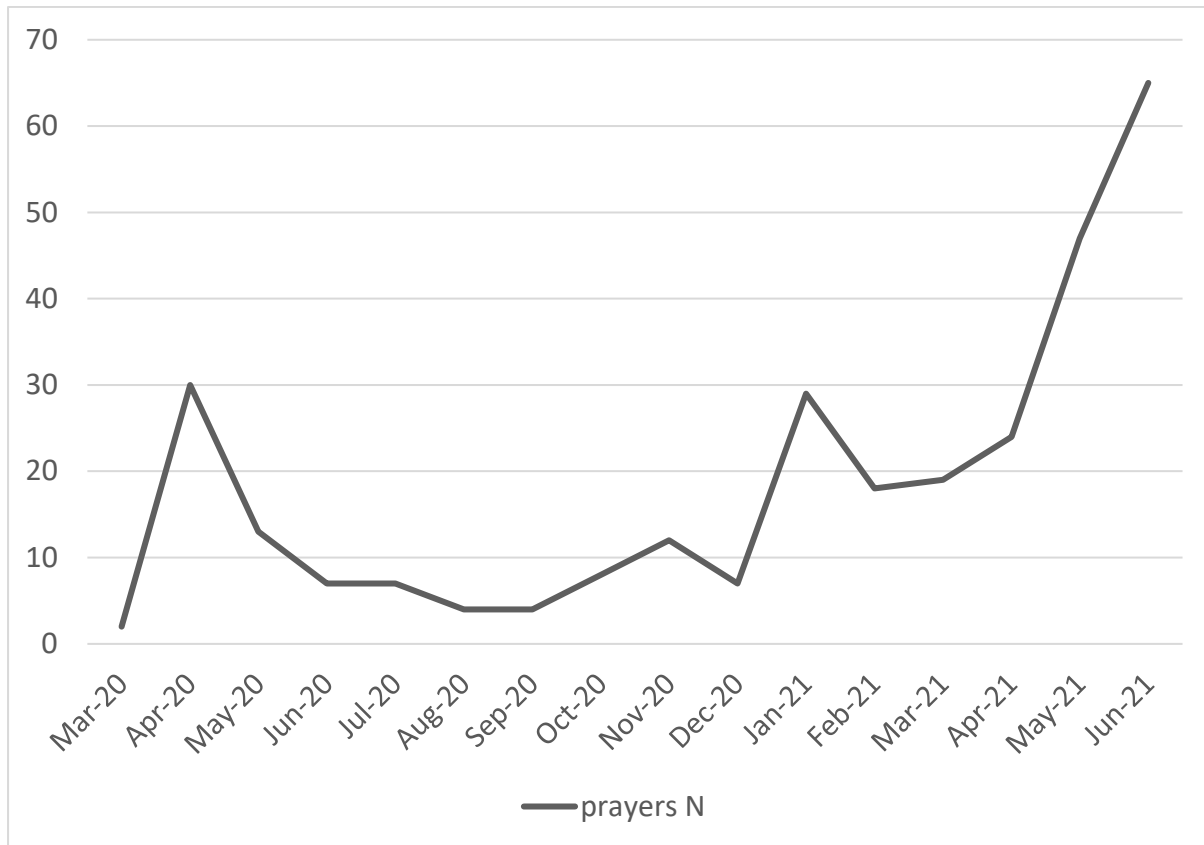*Online prayers posted 29 March 2020 to 30 June 2021 (N = 296)*

Table 1

ApSAFIP prayer reference: Liverpool Cathedral compared with two online studies

Prayer reference	Liverpool		Online study 1		Online study 2	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Others	300	81	166	57	243	42
Self	43	12	98	34	260	45
Global	29	8	26	9	72	12
Animals	0	0	0	0	2	0.3

Note: Liverpool Cathedral, N = 372 requests

Online study 1, N = 290 requests (ap Siôn & Edwards, 2012)

Online study 2, N = 577 requests (ap Siôn, 2016)

Table 2

ApSAFIP prayer intention: Liverpool Cathedral compared with two online studies

Prayer intention	Liverpool		Online study 1		Online study 2	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Illness	173	47	75	26	189	33
Death	107	29	13	4	18	3
Growth	24	6	51	18	124	21
Open	22	6	1	1	3	1
Work	15	4	53	18	107	19
General	13	3	13	4	32	6
Relationships	10	3	69	24	73	13
Housing	6	2	n/a	n/a	11	2
Travel	1	0.3	1	1	1	0.2
Conflict/disaster	1	0.3	13	4	18	3
Sport/recreation	0	0	0	0	1	0.2

Note: Liverpool Cathedral, N = 372 requests

Online study 1, N = 290 requests (ap Siôn & Edwards, 2012)

Online study 2, N = 577 requests (ap Siôn, 2016)

Table 3

ApSAFIP prayer objective: Liverpool Cathedral compared with two online studies

Prayer objective	Liverpool		Online study 1		Online study 2	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Primary control	208	56	241	83	487	84
PC1	13	6	11	5	74	15
PC2	195	94	230	95	413	85
Secondary control	164	44	49	17	90	16

Note: Liverpool Cathedral, N = 372 requests

Online study 1, N = 290 requests (ap Siôn & Edwards, 2012)

Online study 2, N = 577 requests (ap Siôn, 2016)