



The Abbey Church of the Holy Cross Pershore

Sunday 11th December 2022

Wholeness and Healing Service

The all-important aim in Christian healing is to allow God's mysterious and silent presence within us to become more and more not only a reality, but the reality in our lives which gives meaning shape and purpose to everything we do, everything we are.

Welcome and Introduction

We come in this Service to God

In our need, and bringing with us the needs of the world.

We come to you, for you come to us in Jesus

And you know by experience what human life is like.

We come with our faith and with our doubts;

We come with our hopes and with our fears.

We come as we are, because you invite us to come

And you have promised never to turn us away

Hymn

(Millicent Kingham – 'Benson')

God is working his purpose out
as year succeeds to year.

God is working his purpose out
and the day is drawing near.

Nearer and nearer draws the time,
the time that shall surely be,
when the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
as the waters cover the sea.

How can we do the work of God,
how prosper and increase
harmony in the human race
and the reign of perfect peace?
What can we do to urge the time,
the time that shall surely be,
when the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
as the waters cover the sea?

March we forth in the strength of God,
his banner is unfurled;
let the light of the gospel shine
in the darkness of the world:
strengthen the weary, heal the sick
and set ev'ry captive free,
that the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
as the waters cover the sea.

All our efforts are nothing worth
unless God blesses the deed;
vain our hopes for the harvest tide
till he brings to life the seed.
Yet ever nearer draws the time,
the time that shall surely be,
when the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
as the waters cover the sea.

(Arthur Campbell Ainger adapted Michael Forster)

Prayer of Penitence:

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: 'Anyone who comes to me I will never turn away.'
In the presence of God, let us confess our sins.

Silence

Lord Jesus, you came to reconcile us to God and to one another,

Lord have mercy **Lord have mercy**

Lord Jesus, you heal the wounds of sin and division,

Christ have mercy **Christ have mercy**

Lord Jesus, you offer us a new beginning,

Lord have mercy **Lord have mercy**

Silence

God is love, through Jesus our sins are forgiven. Let us live in the power of the Spirit.

Amen

Collect

Heavenly Father, you anointed your Son Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit and with power to bring to us all the blessings of your Kingdom. Anoint your Church with the same Holy Spirit, that we who share in his suffering and victory may bear witness to the gospel of salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen**

Sit for:

Readings from Scripture

First Reading – Zephaniah 34:14-end

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!
The LORD has taken away the judgements against you,
he has turned away your enemies.
The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.
On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak.
The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival.
I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it.
I will deal with all your oppressors at that time.
And I will save the lame and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth.
At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of
the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Second Reading – Philippeans 4 : 4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Hymn

(‘Pie Cantiones’ arr. Richard Lloyd)

1. Long ago, prophets knew
Christ would come, born a Jew.
come to make all things new,
bear his people’s burden,
freely love and pardon.

2. God in time, God in man,
this is God’s timeless plan:
he will come as a man,
born himself of woman,
God divinely human.

*Ring bells, ring, ring, ring!
Sing choirs sing, sing, sing!
When he comes, when he comes,
who will make him welcome?*

Journey ends! Where afar
Bethlehem shines, like a star,
stable door stands ajar.
Unborn Son of Mary,
Saviour, do not tarry!

(Fred Pratt Green b.1903)

Reflection/Meditation

Litany of Healing

To strengthen our faith and hope we now share any experiences when earlier prayers have been answered or offer our own prayers of thanksgiving in silence.....

Loving God, we give you thanks for health restored and prayers answered
Praise to you, O Christ.

And now we turn to God in prayer for all those ongoing situations – beginning with the prayer by the Dean of Worcester for the people of Ukraine:

‘Lord of all the earth be present with the people of Ukraine at this time of danger, fear and conflict. Grant that wise and peaceable counsels may yet prevail and give to them and all nations who are suffering the freedom they desire and deserve. Amen’

God of compassion and love, we offer you all our suffering and pain. Give us strength to bear our weakness; healing even when there is no cure; peace in the midst of turmoil and love to fill the spaces in our lives.

Loving God, we hold in your healing presence those who suffer pain and ill-health, with their families, friends and those who care for them:

May they know the deep peace of Christ

Loving God, we hold in your healing presence those who suffer in mind and spirit and all those who care for them:

May they know the deep peace of Christ

Loving God, we hold in your presence the suffering people of the world and the places where people are experiencing division, injustice and violence:

May they know the deep peace of Christ

Loving God, we hold in your healing presence those struggling to overcome abuse or addiction, those supporting and working with them, and all whose suffering has distanced them from those they love:

May they know the deep peace of Christ

Loving God, we hold in your healing presence those facing bereavement. We also pray for those who have died:

May they know the deep peace of Christ

Loving God, we hold in your healing presence and peace those for whom we have been asked to pray privately and whose prayers have been placed on the altar during this service:

‘Lord, you know the needs of each one of us, our strengths and our weaknesses, our hopes and disappointments. We commend to your loving care those for whom we have been asked to pray. Guard them as the apple of your eye, hide them under the shadow of your wings, show them your merciful love – in health or in sickness, in life or in death. We ask this in the name of Jesus.’

God of love **Hear our prayers, Amen.**

We invite everyone to come forward for healing prayer

After we have returned to our seats we sing:

Hymn

(Jacques Berthier 1923-1994)

Wait for the Lord,
whose day is near;
wait for the Lord,
keep watch, take heart.

(Repeat 3 more times)

Say together - Prayer:

The Almighty God, who is a strong tower for all who put their trust in him, whom all things in heaven and earth and under the earth obey, be now and evermore our defence. May we believe and trust that the only name under heaven given for health and salvation is the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

Thanksgiving

Say together:

**For loving the world and knowing our names, thank you, God
For your strength that fills us and your love that heals us, thank you, God
that leads us into tomorrow, thank you, God
Come bless us, hold us, wrestle with us, warm us in your embrace,
for we are your people and you are our justice and joy. Amen**

Hymn

(Franconia SM)

1. The advent of our King
our prayers must now employ,
and we must hymns of welcome sing
in strains of holy joy.

2. The everlasting Son
incarnate deigns to be;
himself a servant's form puts on,
to set his servants free.

3. Daughter of Sion, rise
to meet thy lowly King;
nor let thy faithless heart despise
the peace he comes to bring.

4. As Judge, on clouds of light,
he soon will come again,
and his true members all unite
with him in heav'n to reign.

5. All glory to the Son
who comes to set us free,
with Father, Spirit, ever One,
through all eternity.

(Charles Coffin – trans. John Chandler)

The Blessing

May the blessing of God surround us
May angels and friends share our journey
May we be wise and strong and creative
May we celebrate life and hope
May God's image grow within us, gently, powerfully, tenderly
May we be cradled in warmth and healing
May we be held in God's wisdom and love
May the gospel of life sustain us all the days of our journey home.

Let us go into the world in the joy and peace of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

*Our next service is on Sunday 8th January 2023 at 5pm
in Pershore Abbey*

