



The Abbey Church of the Holy Cross Pershore

Sunday 12th March 2023

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

(adapted R Vaughan Williams – Tune Sussex)

1. Father, hear the prayer we offer;
not for ease that prayer shall be,
but for strength that we may ever
live our lives courageously.

2. Not for ever in green pastures
do we ask our way to be;
but the steep and rugged pathway
may we tread rejoicingly.

3. Not for ever by still waters
would we idly rest and stay;
but would smite the living fountains
from the rock along our way

4. Be our strength in hours of weakness
in our wand'rings be our guide,
through endeavour, failure, danger,
Father, be thou at our side.

(Maria Willis 1824-1908)

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 – Psalm 46

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;
though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.
God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;
God will help it when the morning dawns.
The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter;
he utters his voice, the earth melts.
The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Come, behold the works of the LORD;
see what desolations he has brought on the earth.
He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.
'Be still, and know that I am God!
I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth.'
The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

For the word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

Second Reading – John 2:13-22

The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money-changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves, 'Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a market-place!' His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for your house will consume me.'

The Jews then said to him, 'What sign can you show us for doing this?' Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews then said, 'This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the temple of his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

For the word of the Lord **Thanks be to God**

Hymn

(Londonderry Air)

I cannot tell how he whom angels worship
should stoop to love the peoples of the earth,
or why the shepherd he should seek the wanderer
with his mysterious promise of new birth.
But this I know, that he was born of Mary,
when Beth'lem's manger was his only home,
and that he lived at Nazareth and laboured,
and so the Saviour, Saviour of the world is come.

I cannot tell how silently he suffered,
as with his peace he graced this place of tears,
or how his heart upon the cross was broken,
the crown of pain to three and thirty years.
But this I know, he heals the broken-hearted,
and stays our sin, and calms our lurking fear,
and lifts the burden from the heavy laden,
for yet the Saviour, Saviour of the world is here.

I cannot tell how he will win the nations,
how he will claim his earthly heritage,
how satisfy the needs and aspirations
of east and west, of sinner and of sage.
But this I know, all flesh shall see his glory,
and he shall reap the harvest he has sown,
and some glad day his sun shall shine in splendour
when he the Saviour, Saviour of the world is known.

I cannot tell how all the lands shall worship,
when, at his bidding, every storm is stilled,
or who can say how great the jubilation
when every heart with perfect love is filled.
But this I know, the skies will thrill with rapture,
and myriad, myriad human voices sing,
and earth to heav'n and heav'n to earth will answer;
'At last the Saviour, Saviour of the world is King!'

(William Young Fullerton 1857-1932)

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:

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 three more times

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

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
For your presence here with us now and for your hand
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

(arr. R Vaughan Williams – tune: Kingsfold)

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
‘Come unto me and rest,
lay down thou weary one, lay down
thy head upon my breast.’
I came to Jesus as I was,
so weary, worn and sad,
I found in him a resting place
and he has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
‘Behold I freely give
the living water, thirsty one;
stoop down and drink and live.’
I came to Jesus and I drank
of that life-giving stream;
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
and now I live in him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'I am this dark world's light;
look unto me, thy morn will rise
and all thy day be bright.'
I looked to Jesus and I found
in him my star, my sun;
and in that light of life I'll walk
till trav'ling days are done.

(Horatius Bonar 1808-1889)

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.

Dismissal

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

Thanks be to God.

*There will not be a service on Easter Sunday -
Our next service is on Sunday 14th May 2023 at 5pm*