



The Abbey Church of the Holy Cross Pershore

Sunday 8th October 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

Maria Willis (1824-1908)

1. Father, hear the prayer we offer:
not for ease thy 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 rocks 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.

(Trad. English melody
adapted Ralph Vaughan Williams)

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 from Joel 3 : 11-16

Come quickly, all you nations all around, gather yourselves there.

Bring down your warriors, O LORD.

Let the nations rouse themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the neighbouring nations.

Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe.

Go in, tread, for the wine press is full.

The vats overflow, for their wickedness is great.

Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision!

For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.

The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining.

The LORD roars from Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth shake. But the LORD is a refuge for his people, a stronghold for the people of Israel.

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Second Reading – Matthew 9 : 35-38

Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.'

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

Hymn

(Jean Holloway b1939)

Lord, we come to ask your healing,
teach us of love;
all unspoken shame revealing,
teach us of love.

Take our selfish thoughts and actions,
petty feuds divisive factions,
hear us now to you appealing,
teach us of love.

Soothe away our pain and sorrow,
hold us in love;
grace we cannot buy nor borrow,
hold us in love.

Though we see but dark and danger,
though we spurn both friend and stranger,
though we often dread tomorrow,
hold us in love.

Help us live for one another,
bind us in love;
stranger, neighbour, father, mother,
bind us ,in love.

All are equal at your table,
through your Spirit make us able
to embrace as sister, brother,
bind us in love.

(Trad.Welsh: Ar Hyd Y Nos)

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:

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 healing presence the suffering people of the world and the places where people are experiencing division, injustice and violence including Ukraine, Nigeria, Yemen, Myanmar, South Sudan and many others.

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

(Daniel Iverson)

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me;
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me;
Melt me, mould me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us;
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us;
Melt us, mould us, fill us, use us.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on them;
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on them;
Melt them, mould them, fill them, use them.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on them.

(Living God)

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

**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

(Fred Kaan: b.1929)

1. For the healing of the nations,
Lord we pray with one accord;
For a just and equal sharing
Of the things that earth affords.
To a life of love in action
Help us rise and pledge our word.

2. Lead us, Father into freedom,
From despair your world release;
That, redeemed from war and hatred
All may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and goodness
Fear will die and hope increase.

3. All that kills abundant living,
let it from the earth be banned;
pride of status, race or schooling
dogmas that obscure your plan.
In our common quest for justice
may we hallow life's brief span.

4. You, creator God, have written
your great name on humankind;
for our growing in your likeness
bring the life of Christ to mind;
that by our response and service
earth its destiny may find.

(Picardy – arr. Richard Lloyd)

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 12th November at 5pm

