



# The Abbey Church of the Holy Cross Pershore

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November 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

Hear me, dear Lord, in this my time of sorrow.

For even if I turn from you today

I need to know your love is there tomorrow  
and new hope still can lighten up my way.

Forgive me, Lord, if in the tears of sadness  
my anger makes me take your name in vain,  
and life seems for a while to have no gladness  
and I refuse to let you share my pain.

Help me, my God, through all surrounding darkness,  
to hold by faith what often I have read  
that even in death's unremitting starkness  
the Son of Man has risen from the dead.  
So take this life that's left with its misgivings,  
from grief and pain create in me anew  
a faith that finds in you a way of living,  
a love that offers all it has to you.

(tune: Londonderry Air)

### **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 116:4-end**

Then I called on the name of the LORD: 'O LORD, I pray, save my life!'

Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; our God is merciful. The LORD protects the simple; when I was brought low, he saved me. Return, O my soul, to your rest, for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you. For you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling.

I walk before the LORD in the land of the living.  
I kept my faith, even when I said, 'I am greatly afflicted';  
I said in my consternation, 'Everyone is a liar.'

What shall I return to the LORD for all his bounty to me?  
I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD,  
I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people.  
Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his faithful ones.  
O LORD, I am your servant; I am your servant, the child of your serving-maid.  
You have loosed my bonds. I will offer to you a thanksgiving sacrifice  
and call on the name of the LORD.  
I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people,  
in the courts of the house of the LORD, in your midst, O Jerusalem.  
Praise the LORD!

Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.  
I say to the LORD, 'You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you.'

As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble, in whom is all my delight.  
Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows;  
their drink-offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names upon my lips.  
The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.  
The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage.

I bless the LORD who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me. I keep  
the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure.  
For you do not give me up to Sheol, or let your faithful one see the Pit.  
You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy;  
in your right hand are pleasures for evermore.

For the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

## **Second Reading – Thessalonians 4:13-end**

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord for ever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

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

## Hymn

(Fred Kaan b.1929)

God! When human bonds are broken  
and we lack the love or skill  
to restore the hope of healing  
give us grace and make us still.

Through that stillness, with your Spirit  
come into our world of stress,  
for the sake of Christ forgiving  
all the failures we confess.

You in us are bruised and broken:  
hear us as we seek release  
from the pain of earlier living;  
set us free and grant us peace.

Send us, God of new beginnings,  
humbly, hopeful into life.  
Use us as a means of blessing;  
make us stronger, give us faith.

Give us faith to be more faithful,  
give us hope to be more true,  
give us love to go on learning:  
God! Encourage and renew!

(Drakes Broughton – Edward Elgar)

## 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 today with a prayer for the peoples of Ukraine and the Holy Land*

‘Lord of all the earth be present with all people at this time of danger, fear and conflict. Grant that wise and peaceable counsels may 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 healing 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**

(arr. Adrian Vernon Fish b.1956)

Be still and know that I am God.  
Be still and know that I am God.  
Be still and know that I am God.

I am the Lord that healeth thee.  
I am the Lord that healeth thee.  
I am the Lord that healeth thee.

In thee, O Lord, I put my trust.  
In thee, O Lord, I put my trust.  
In thee, O Lord, I put my trust.

*We say together:*

**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

(Richard Bewes from Psalm 46)

God is our strength and refuge,  
our present help in trouble;  
and we therefore will not fear,  
though the earth should change!  
Though mountains shake and tremble,  
though swirling floods are raging,  
God the Lord of hosts is with us evermore!

There is a flowing river  
within God's holy city;  
God is in the midst of her –  
she shall not be moved!  
God's help is swiftly given,  
thrones vanish at his presence –  
God the Lord of hosts is with us evermore!

Come, see the works of our maker,  
learn of his deeds all powerful;  
wars will cease across the world  
when he shatters the spear!  
Be still and know your creator,  
uplift him in the nations –  
God the Lord of hosts is with us evermore!

(Eric Coates – arr. John Barnard)

## 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 10<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 5pm  
to be held in St Andrews Centre*

***entitled 'Light in our darkness'***  
*when we welcome everyone who wishes to avoid a commercial  
Christmas*