



# The Abbey Church of the Holy Cross Pershore

Sunday 8th December 2024

## Light in our Darkness

### 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

Sussex Carol

On Christmas night all Christians sing  
to hear the news the angels bring,  
on Christmas night all Christians sing  
to hear the news the angels bring,  
news of great joy, news of great mirth,  
news of our merciful King's birth.

Then why should we on earth be so sad,  
since our Redeemer made us glad,  
then why should we on earth be so sad,  
since our Redeemer made us glad,  
when from our sins he set us free,  
for all to gain our liberty?

When sin departs before his grace,  
then life and health come in its place,  
when sin departs before his grace,  
then life and health come in its place,  
angels and earth with joy may sing,  
all for to see the newborn King

all out of darkness we have light,  
which made the angels sing this night:  
all out of darkness we have light,  
which made the angels sing this night:  
'Glory to God and peace to men,  
now and for evermore. Amen'

(Traditional English carol  
arranged 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 – Psalm 145:14-end**

The LORD upholds all who are falling,  
and raises up all who are bowed down.  
The eyes of all look to you,  
and you give them their food in due season.  
You open your hand,  
satisfying the desire of every living thing.  
The LORD is just in all his ways,  
and kind in all his doings.  
The LORD is near to all who call on him,  
to all who call on him in truth.  
He fulfils the desire of all who fear him;  
he also hears their cry, and saves them.  
The LORD watches over all who love him,  
but all the wicked he will destroy.  
  
My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD,  
and all flesh will bless his holy name for ever and ever.

For the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

## **Second Reading – Colossians 3: 12-17**

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

For the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

## Hymn

(Mary's Child)

1. Born in the night,  
Mary's child,  
a long way from your home;  
coming in need,  
Mary's child,  
born in a borrowed room.

2. Clear shining light,  
Mary's child,  
your face lights up our way;  
light of the world,  
Mary's child,  
dawn on our darkened day.

3. Truth of our life,  
Mary's child,  
you tell us God is good;  
prove it is true,  
Mary's child,  
go to your cross of wood.

4. Hope of the world,  
Mary's child,  
you're coming soon to reign;  
King of the earth,  
Mary's child,  
walk in our streets again.

(Geoffrey Ainger b.1925)

## Reflection

## Litany

Lord Jesus, hear our prayers, laden with the sufferings of all humankind, laden with the suffering of whole societies. Help us with the power of the Holy Spirit to conquer all sin in all of its manifestations: individual sin and the 'sin of the world'. Let there be revealed to the world the infinite power of merciful and healing love. May it transform consciences and hearts, bringing them wholeness. In your mercy reveal for all the light of hope. Lord in your mercy **Hear our prayer**

Our Father in Heaven

**Remind us constantly that you are parent to all your children, whoever of wherever they are or come from**

Hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come,

**Establishing peace and justice, and hope and life for all peoples**

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.

**Disturb us into awareness of the needs of others**

Forgive us our sins

**Our pride and our prejudices**

As we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation,

**Especially keep our hearts and minds open to see the good in others.**

Deliver us from evil, for the kingdom

**Just and true**

The power

**Gentle and fair**

And the glory

**Shot through with the colours of love**

Are yours for ever and ever

**Amen**

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 this table 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 to light a candle**

*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)*

*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

(Londonderry Air)

I cannot tell how he whom angels worship  
Should stoop to love the peoples of the earth,  
Or why as shepherd he should seek the wanderer  
With his mysterious promise of new birth.  
But this I know, that he was born of Mary,  
When Bethlehem'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 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 heaven and heaven to earth will answer:  
'At last the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is King!'

(William Young Fullerton 1857-1932)

# 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 in the light and peace of Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Our next healing service is on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2025  
at 5pm in Pershore Abbey*

