

Welcome to
your Parish Church
in the Diocese of Birmingham



ALL SAINTS
KINGS HEATH



The Best Supper by Jan Richardson

Holy Communion

Easter VI, Sunday 22nd May 2022

Saying farewell to Sam Mackie soon to be ordained in Derby Diocese

We gather

At home, have ready in an honoured place a portion of food and something to drink. It may be bread and wine or something else. Set your Bible alongside. You might light a candle.

We imagine everyone in their homes around the parish, united in preparing for prayer.

Music as we gather: [Christ is risen!](#)

*Christ is risen! Hallelujah, hallelujah!
Christ is risen, risen indeed, hallelujah!*

1. Love's work is done, the battle is won;
where now, O death is your sting?
He rose again, to rule and to reign,
Jesus our conquering King.

2. Lord over sin, Lord over death,
at his feet Satan must fall!
Ev'ry knee bow; all will confess
Jesus is Lord over all!

3. Tell it abroad, "Jesus is Lord!"
Shout it and let your praise ring!
Gladly we raise our songs of praise,
worship is our offering!

(words & music: C Rolinson & J Mulder)

When the song finishes we stand in silence. We sing: [At the name of Jesus](#)

1. At the name of Jesus ev'ry knee shall bow,
ev'ry tongue confess him King of glory now;
'tis the Father's pleasure we should call him Lord,
who, from the beginning, was the mighty word.

2. At his voice creation sprang at once to sight,
all the angels' faces, all the hosts of light,
thrones and dominations, stars upon their way,
all the heav'nly orders in their great array.

3. Humbled for a season, to receive a name
from the lips of sinners unto whom he came,
faithfully he bore it, spotless to the last,
brought it back victorious when from death he passed.

4. In your hearts enthrone him; there let him subdue
all that is not holy, all that is not true;
crown him as your captain in temptation's hour;
let his will enfold you in its light and pow'r.

5. Truly, this Lord Jesus shall return again,
with his Father's glory, with his angel train;
for all wreaths of empire meet upon his brow,
and our hearts confess him King of glory now.

(words: Caroline Maria Noel; music: Michael Brierley)

We acclaim:

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with *us* all. **Amen.**

WELCOME, BANNS and NOTICES

We pray: **Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known
and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of
our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may
perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

We seek forgiveness

CONFESSION

Deacon: We keep silence and prepare to confess our sins and seek God's
forgiveness.

You raise the dead to life in the Spirit: Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

You bring pardon and peace to the broken in heart: Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

You make one by your Spirit the torn and divided: Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

ABSOLUTION *In church forgiveness is declared for all while at home we pray:*

*May the almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon and forgiveness of
all our sins, time for amendment of life and the grace and strength of
the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

We stand to give thanks for forgiveness, singing THE GLORIA

1. Glory be to God in heaven,
songs of praise and joy we bring;
thankful hearts and voices raising,
to creation's Lord we sing.
Lord we thank you: Lord we bless you:

glory be to God our King;
glory be to God our King.

2. Lamb of God who on your shoulders bore the load of this world's sin: only Son of God the Father you have brought us peace within. Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, now your glorious reign begin; now your glorious reign begin.

3. You O Son of God are holy, you we praise with one accord: none in heaven or earth is like you, only you are Christ the Lord: with the Father and the Spirit ever worshipped and adored; ever worshipped and adored.

THE COLLECT for the Sixth Sunday of Easter

God our redeemer, you have delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of your Son: grant that, as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

READINGS [Acts 16:9-15](#) and [Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5](#)

SONG [Put peace into each other's hands](#)

1. Put peace into each other's hands and like a treasure hold it, protect it like a candle flame, with tenderness enfold it.

3. Put peace into each other's hands like bread we break for sharing; look people warmly in the eye: our life is meant for caring.

2. Put peace into each other's hands with loving expectation; be gentle in your words and ways, in touch with God's creation.

4. As at communion, shape your hands into a waiting cradle; the gift of Christ receive, revere, united round the table.

5. Put Christ into each other's hands, he is love's deepest measure; in love make peace, give peace a chance, and share it like a treasure.

(words: Fred Kaan; music: Irish melody, from the Petrie collection)

We remain standing for the GOSPEL READING [John 14:23-29](#)

All: Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John
Glory to you, O Lord.

At the end This is the Gospel of the Lord

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON from Sam Mackie

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." One of the most quotable pieces of scripture. And one of the most repeatable.

"Do not be afraid." Supposedly this is repeated 365 times throughout our scriptures.

I have heard it used previously as a saying to make fear a taboo. A telling off. Fear as comparable to sin. A reason to hide our true feelings. But I think this is missing the point. Jesus repeatedly says: "Do not be afraid." He says this when the disciples are clearly afraid. It is not preemptive but responsive.

Here Jesus is comforting the disciples' reality of losing him again, and the oppression they face through their faith and future as disciples under a Roman regime.

Jesus' comfort extends to say that they will never be without Him. That his Spirit will be left with them. The Advocate, the Holy Paraclete, the Breath of God, Jesus will be with them in a new way. That, most importantly, there will not be a moment that you [my disciples] are without me [Jesus].

This is why we celebrate Pentecost, which is yet to come in our annual celebrations, as well as Ascension which is this week on Thursday. But for the writer of John's gospel, which we'll call John. Ascension and Pentecost are not separate events. And depending on your interpretation there could even be multiple Pentecost's.

What is important for John is that God came to be with us, and would never leave us.

God, the blessed Trinity, has said:

"Don't be afraid, for I am with you."

"Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you."

"Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last."

This repeated reminder that says: 'I see you and I am with you'.

The Holy Spirit, an example of true hospitality, where all are welcome to receive but none are forced. Where we are not alone in our fears, griefs, anxieties. Where cultural norms are transcended by the love of God and the acceptance of ourselves and others. One of my favourite dictionary definitions of hospitality is "Treating others with warmth and generosity." Something our reading from Acts exhibits.

We go from a highly repeated phrase 'do not be afraid', to one perhaps never heard anywhere else in the Bible: 'the women who had gathered there.' Such a simple line, but a

unique sentence in scripture. Paul goes looking for a synagogue, a building full of worshippers, men worth converting. And instead he finds a group of women gathered.

Many scholars have tried to cast off this meeting as accidental, unplanned, just a place where women are causally chatting. Most commentators make assumptions that are inadequate to the text or discriminatory in nature. One renowned theologian sees it as unimaginable that there could be "two foundational stories for the church community in a single city."¹ He is minimising the story of Lydia and the women, and seeing the later story of Paul's breakout from prison as the "real" event in Phillipi. Lydia and the women are merely limited to "prologue".

Not only is this meeting of women intentional, purposeful. Deeper contextual analysis, as well as looking into the Greek, suggests that this is at its least a 'place of prayer'. And at its most likely a synagogue in its own right.² Moreover, Acts 16 can serve as proof, as an "attestation of women's presence at Jewish worship services".³ In Phillipi, these women were very intentionally worshipping together, it has too often pretended to be otherwise.

Paul found the very thing he set out to find, the very Spirit Jesus promised to the disciples led him there. Paul found a meeting place for worship, those willing to hear his message and respond. Through this meeting Lydia and her household are baptised. Lydia's household are unlikely to be her family, especially unlikely to be her children. Instead it is probable that her household is a group of women made up of servants and retainers.

Lydia is identified by her profession, which is significantly a dealer in purple cloth. More assumptions are made here as to what that means for her status and value. Our projected understanding, mainly from the passion narrative with Jesus, is that is purple a rich colour to produce and make. But this is not as simple as it may seem either. From this region of Europe and surrounding areas, history tells us that purple was not an expensive colour to create. Instead, if made through the usual means of root vegetables, purple is inexpensive, and laborious work.

Lydia may be wealthy through her trade, it appears she is able to travel, to afford to support and employ a household. It is unknown as to whether she is a widow, married, has wealth from elsewhere. But this is not Lydia's value. Lydia is Paul's first baptism in Europe, Paul's first step towards approaching Rome. Perhaps Lydia is more palatable to readers as being rich, someone with status, a successful business owner. None of these things makes Lydia's baptism have meaning.

The meaning for Lydia's baptism is found in the confessional vows in Galatians 3, these are the words and the commitments she is likely to have made:
That 'there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.'

¹ Gottfried Schille

² Women in the Acts of the Apostles, Ivoni Richter Reimer

³ B.J. Brooten, Women

A quaint image of some woman gathering outside and a quick baptism for Paul should not distract us from the grittiness here. These women are meeting and worshipping together within a prominent Roman colony. Paul and his companions have traveled for miles, in search of purpose in Phillipi but also a place to stay and for safety. The very thing that Lydia offers to them. In all this, Lydia had to talk Paul into receiving her hospitality. But why?

Lydia offers hospitality and, consequently, political protection, but Paul refuses it because he regards women as untrustworthy, even though baptism has just sealed this faithfulness. The baptism where she said that it does not matter if she is 'Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.'

Lydia addresses this contradiction, the contradiction of her now being equal to Paul but not able to be host to him and his companions. And through her wisdom she prevails. In Lydia they find someone who is faithful, generous and hospitable, much to their own benefit. The power to offer political resistance is manifested in this case by her offer of hospitality.

All around the world homes play host to refugees, we will know many applying and receiving refugees, ready to welcome and share. My hope is that this would be the case for Russian refugees fleeing from a war-centric political system. My hope is that all will be welcome to churches across the country regardless of what they look like, how they speak, who they love. My hope is that as we share communion together today we get a sense of that hospitality Lydia shared with her household and her new siblings in Christ.

Lydia, in the few words recorded of her speaking, one of the few women's voices we hear in our scriptures, offers hospitality, challenges Paul and is an example of what Baptism means to her.

Paul was willing to grow his own status, share his own message, but in a simple offer of hospitality from a woman his generosity struggled to stretch that far. In laying aside the prejudices of society, the projections we lay onto the biblical text in order to confine Lydia to a woman of status, money and good standing, we miss the part where she is able to host Paul. Able to host Paul due to commitment made at her baptism. Not because of having a house with enough room, enough food to share or learned theological understanding. Lydia hosts because she is one with them in Jesus Christ and see is an example to us all.

As we are about to share Holy Communion together, here is a poem by Jan Richardson:

And the table
will be wide.
And the welcome
will be wide.
And the arms
will open wide
to gather us in.

And our hearts
will open wide
to receive.

And we will come
as children who trust
there is enough.
And we will come
unhindered and free.
And our aching
will be met
with bread.
And our sorrow
will be met
with wine.

And we will open our hands
to the feast
without shame.
And we will turn
toward each other
without fear.
And we will give up
our appetite
for despair.
And we will taste
and know
of delight.

And we will become bread
for a hungry world.
And we will become drink
for those who thirst.
And the blessed
will become the blessing.
And everywhere
will be the feast.⁴

⁴ Jan L. Richardson, In Wisdom's Path: Discovering the Sacred in Every Season

We affirm our faith

We stand and at home, if able, we turn to look in the direction of Church

Deacon: We affirm our faith in God, revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

**All: I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

INTERCESSIONS In church our prayers are led by Heather Bateson.

At home you might like to pray:

after meeting Lydia in Acts, for all women in business and industry today, and for all whose ministry in the church is one of hospitality;

after picturing the tree of life in heaven, we pray for the healing of the nations;

after overhearing Jesus' promise to the disciples at supper, we pray for the Spirit to remind us every meal time of all that Jesus taught. We pray for all who usually eat alone, that they will know God's company. We pray for any who are troubled or afraid.

We pray for the families of Julia McCabe and Bill Gardner whose funerals take place here this week.

THE PEACE

We pause to remember each other: those worshipping at home, and those worshipping in Church and those we care for who are far away.

Deacon: Jesus said "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." We say to one each other:

The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

SONG [Christ's is the world](#)

1. Christ's is the world in which we move,
Christ's are the folk we're summoned to love,
Christ's is the voice which calls us to care,
and Christ is the one who meets us here.

*To the lost Christ shows his face;
to the unloved he gives his embrace;
to those who cry in pain or disgrace,
Christ makes with his friends a touching place.*

2. Feel for the people we most avoid,
strange or bereaved or never employed;
feel for the women, and feel for the men
who fear that their living is all in vain.

3. Feel for the parents who've lost their child,
feel for the women whom men have defiled,
feel for the baby for whom there's no breast,
and feel for the weary who find no rest.

4. Feel for the lives by life confused,
riddled with doubt, in loving abused;
feel for the lonely heart, conscious of sin,
which longs to be pure but fears to begin.

*(words: John L Bell & Graham Maule;
music: Traditional Scottish melody, arr John L Bell & Graham Maule)*

The Table is prepared in Church. At home, now is the time to say the Lord's Prayer (below) and consume the food and drink you have prepared, first praying:

God, we long for Communion. With this symbolic meal stir my hope for the fellowship meal we cannot yet see, and help me wait for it with patience. **Amen.**

(cf Romans 8:2)

We tell the story of salvation

Priest: The Lord is here.

All: God's Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

We lift our hearts in praise to you, God of glory, because in every time and place you have shown yourself to your people and revealed your purpose to dwell with them always. In the wilderness you made your place of dwelling in a tabernacle. In Jerusalem the temple became a theatre of encounter with you. In Jesus your Son you came among us, making your home in human flesh. In his death he faced the consequences of our sin and in his resurrection he made possible an everlasting home for us at your right hand. You have prepared for us a holy city of heavenly lights where we will dwell with you for ever. So with angels and archangels we join the praises sung for ever more in that eternal city:

We repeat after the cantor:

All: Holy, holy, holy Lord!

God of power and God of might.

Heav'n and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is he who comes

in the name of the Lord most high.

Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.

Lord God Almighty, from your throne flows the river of life. Fed from that river, your tree of life bears fruit for the healing of the nations. Nourish your church in this sacred meal, that the bread and wine we receive may be poured out through us as life abundant. By the power of the Holy Spirit, make your church a healing balm in places of suffering and sorrow. Sanctify this bread and cup that they may be for us the body and blood of your Son. Who, at supper with his disciples, took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying, "Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

A bell is rung

After supper he took the cup. Again he gave you thanks, and gave it to his disciples saying, "Drink this, all of you: this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

A bell is rung

Deacon: Great is the mystery of faith:

**All: Christ has died,
Christ is risen
Christ will come again.**

Revealing God, whose radiance is all holiness, make your face to shine upon us that we may be saved. Look with mercy upon those who turn to you in hope and long for peace the world cannot give. Hold in your light of compassion every troubled heart that waits for the dawn of your one eternal day. Shine with the fullness of your love into every fear-filled soul and make yourself known to all who long to see your face; until that hour when night is no more and there is no need of lamp or sun, when you will be our light and when in your eternal radiance you shall reign for ever and ever, one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Deacon: As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

Priest: We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All: Though we are many, we are one body.
For we all share in one bread.**

Draw near with faith. Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which he gave for you and his blood which he shed for you. Eat and drink in remembrance that he died and now lives for you, and feed on him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving.

We sing: **Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.**
Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.
Jesus, Redeemer of the world, give us your peace. (x2)

We pause to remember all who pray at home, then share the bread and wine, now for us the body and blood of Christ. We form two lines to receive bread, then wine if you wish. No one should feel obliged if you do not feel ready to share the common cup. Receiving only bread you still make your Communion fully and deeply. Do what feels most comfortable to you.

If anyone prefers not to receive either, you are welcome still to come forward for a prayer of blessing. Just keep your hands by your sides and we will pray for you.

SONG during Communion [This is my body](#)

1. This is my body, broken for you,
bringing you wholeness, making you free.
Take it and eat it, and when you do,
do it in love for me.

2. This is my blood, poured out for you,
bringing forgiveness, making you free.
Take it and drink it, and when you do,
do it in love for me.

3. Back to my Father soon I shall go.
Do not forget me; then will you see
I am still with you, and you will know
you're very close to me.

4. Filled with my Spirit, how you will grow!
You are my branches; I am the tree.
If you are faithful, others will know
you are alive in me.

5. Love one another; I have loved you,
and I have shown you how to be free;
serve one another, and when you do,
do it in love for me.

(words: vv1 & 2 Jimmy Owens, vv3-5 Damian Lundy; music: Peter Jacobs, arr Christopher Tambling)

And

1. Holy Spirit, come, confirm us in the truth that Christ makes known; we have faith and understanding through your promised light alone.
2. Holy Spirit, come, console us, come as Advocate to plead; loving Spirit from the Father, grant in Christ the help we need.
3. Holy Spirit, come, renew us, come yourself to make us live; holy through your loving presence, holy through the gifts you give.
4. Holy Spirit, come, possess us, you the love of Three in One, Holy Spirit of the Father, Holy Spirit of the Son.

(words: Brian Foley; music: Richard Redhead)

We are sent out

Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us with your Word [*and with the body of Christ*]. Strengthen us in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.

A PRAYER for Sam

THE BLESSING

May the God of all grace who called *us* to his eternal glory in Christ Jesus establish, strengthen and settle *us* in the faith, and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among *us* and remain with *us* always. **Amen.**

HYMN

1. Jesus lives! thy terrors now can no more, O death, appal us.
Jesus lives! by this we know thou, O grave, canst not enthrall us.
Alleluia.
2. Jesus lives! henceforth is death but the gate of life immortal:
this shall calm our trembling breath, when we pass its gloomy portal.
Alleluia.
3. Jesus lives! for us he died; then, alone to Jesus living,
pure in heart may we abide, glory to our Saviour giving. Alleluia.
4. Jesus lives! our hearts know well naught from us his love shall sever;
life nor death nor pow'rs of hell tear us from his keeping ever. Alleluia.

5. Jesus lives! to him the throne over all the world is given:
may we go where he is gone, rest and reign with him in heaven.
Alleluia.

(words: Christian Fürchtegott Gellert, trans Frances Elizabeth Cox alt; music: Henry John Gauntlett)

We acclaim:

Deacon: Alleluia! Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ, Amen.



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