

Welcome to  
your Parish Church  
in the Diocese of Birmingham



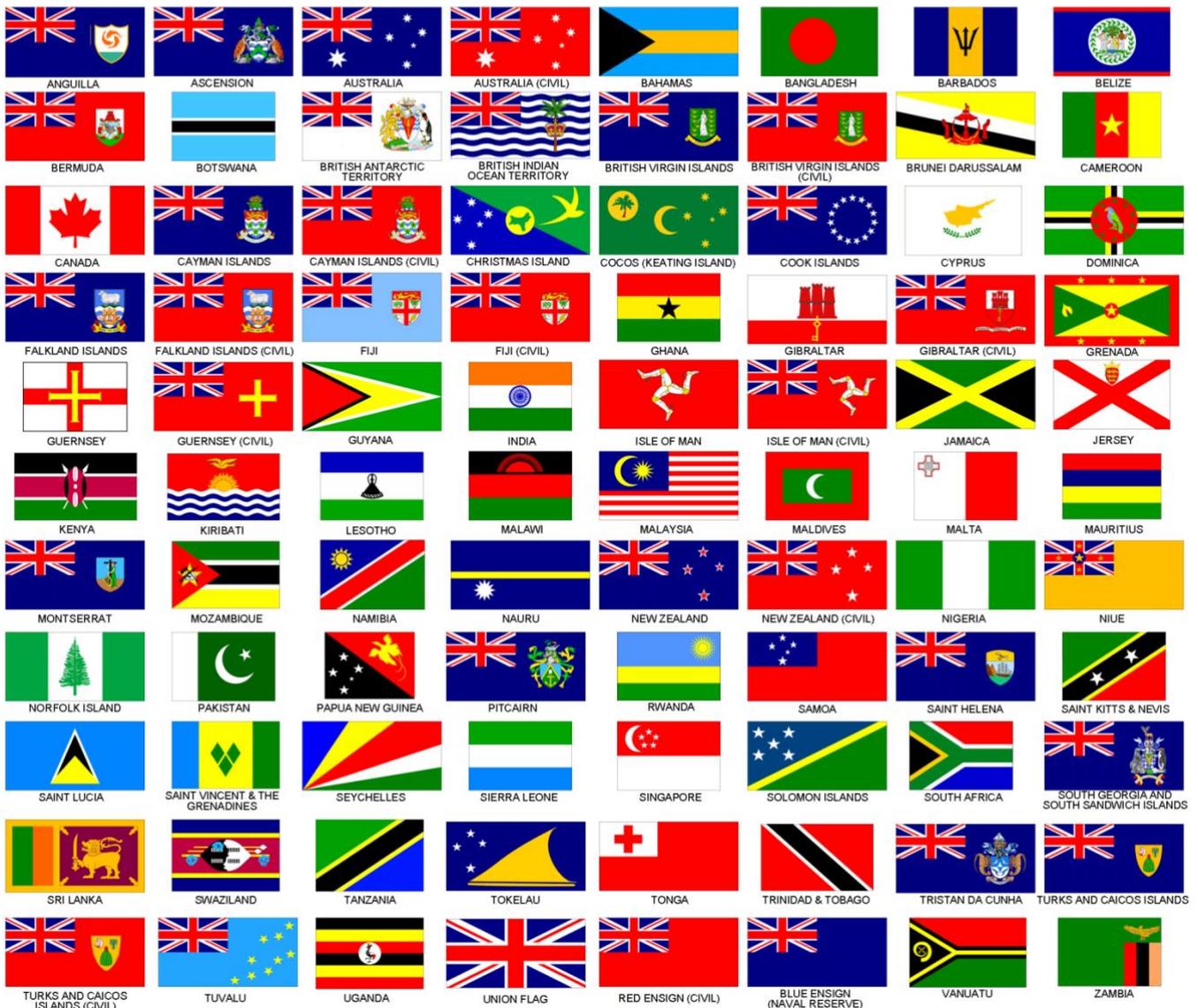
ALL SAINTS  
KINGS HEATH

# Pentecost and Jubilee Holy Communion

## FLAGS OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF NATIONS



COMMONWEALTH FLAG (ADOPTED 1976)



Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022

# 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. Have ready a selection of candles and something with which to light them when the time comes.*

*In church, we imagine everyone in their homes around the parish, united in preparing for prayer.*

*Music as we gather: [Spirit of God, unseen as the wind](#)*

*Spirit of God, unseen as the wind,  
gentle as is the dove:  
teach us the truth and help us believe,  
show us the Saviour's love!*

1. You spoke to us – long, long ago –  
gave us the written word;  
we read it still, needing its truth,  
through it God's voice is heard.
2. Without your help we fail our Lord,  
we cannot live his way;  
we need your power, we need your strength,  
following Christ each day.

*(words: Margaret Old; music: Traditional Scottish, arr David Iliff)*

*When the song finishes we stand in silence.*

*We express our expectation that God will fulfil Jesus' promise:*

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

As we wait in silence, **fill us with your Spirit.**

As we listen to your word, **fill us with your Spirit.**

As we worship you in majesty, **fill us with your Spirit.**

As we long for your refreshing, **fill us with your Spirit.**

As we long for your renewing, **fill us with your Spirit.**

As we long for your equipping, **fill us with your Spirit.**

As we long for your empowering, **fill us with your Spirit.**

*We sing:* [Come down, O love divine](#)

1. Come down, O Love divine,  
seek thou this soul of mine,  
and visit it with thine own ardour glowing;  
O Comforter, draw near,  
within my heart appear,  
and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.

2. O let it freely burn,  
till earthly passions turn  
to dust and ashes in its heat consuming;  
and let thy glorious light  
shine ever on my sight,  
and clothe me round, the while my path illuming.

3. Let holy charity  
mine outward vesture be,  
and lowliness become mine inner clothing;  
true lowliness of heart,  
which takes the humbler part,  
and o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.

4. And so the yearning strong,  
with which the soul will long,  
shall far outpass the pow'r of human telling;  
nor can we guess its grace,  
till we become the place  
wherein the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling.

*(words: 'Discendi, amor santo' by Bianco da Siena, trans Richard F Littledale alt;  
music: Ralph Vaughan Williams)*

READING [Acts 2:1-21](#)

*At home, light the candles you have prepared while you listen to the reading.*

*In Church, candles are lit on the altar and among the congregation.*

*We pray* THE COLLECT *together*

**Holy Spirit, sent by the Father, ignite in us your holy fire; revive your church with the breath of love, and renew the face of the earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. 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 pray for the children's groups beginning today.*

## We seek forgiveness

### CONFESSION

Deacon: St Paul says, "do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned." Therefore we ask God's spirit to restore our perspective. (Romans 12:3)

*Silence*

Acknowledging misunderstanding among nations, faiths, families from council houses to castles, Go-between God,<sup>1</sup>  
**help us to understand each other.**

Naming overbearing power, undue influence of wealth and class, prejudice of colour, class and gender: wise God,<sup>2</sup>  
**teach us humility.**

Confessing our greed, status anxiety, jealousy and pride: regal God, who washes feet,<sup>3</sup>  
**inspire us to serve.**

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

*May the God of love and power forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by his Holy Spirit and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. Amen.*

*We stand to give thanks for forgiveness, singing THE GLORIA (tune: Ode to Joy)*

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<sup>1</sup> See John V Taylor [The Go-between God](#)

<sup>2</sup> See Proverbs 8

<sup>3</sup> See John 13

1. Glory be to God in heaven,  
peace to those who love him well;  
on the earth let all his people  
speak his grace, his wonders tell:  
Lord, we praise you for your glory,  
mighty Father, heavenly King;  
hear our joyful adoration  
and accept the thanks we bring.

2. Only Son of God the Father,  
Lamb who takes our sin away,  
now with him in triumph seated,  
for your mercy, Lord we pray:  
Jesus Christ, most high and holy;  
Saviour, you are God alone  
in the glory of the Father  
with the Spirit: Three in One!

*We sit for the SECOND READING [Genesis 11:1-9](#) extinguishing our candles.*

HYMN [Breathe on me, breath of God](#)

1. Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
fill me with life anew,  
that as you love, so may I love,  
and do what you would do.

3. Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
fulfil my heart's desire,  
until this earthly part of me  
glows with your heav'nly fire.

2. Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
until my heart is pure:  
until my will is one with yours  
to do and to endure.

4. Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
so shall I never die,  
but live with you the perfect life  
of your eternity.

*(words: Edwin Hatch alt; music: Charles Lockhart)*

*We remain standing for the GOSPEL READING [John 14:8-17](#)*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

**All: Glory to you, O Lord.**

*At the end* This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**All: Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON from David

Looking over at her neighbour, so resentful that she seemed happy and confident, so jealous that she was making lots of friends, hurt that she didn't seem to need him any more, Russia decided to lash out. Russia wanted to take off Ukraine the things he was jealous of. It is a tragic display of a deluded man trying to assert himself because he feels hollow and lost inside. The tragedy is, Russia underestimates itself. There is much to love and admire. If only he'd chosen to be the kind of friend he's jealous of not being. In a strange mixture of underestimation and over estimation, Russia stomps around and breaks things. Ironically under-estimating his own value, he overstates his power and over asserts greedy claims.

As we mark 100 days of Russia's status-anxiety playing out in war, and we mark seventy years of Queen Elizabeth II's reign, it is unbearably moving that our reflection on national identity happens

at the feast of Pentecost. It too is a numerical moment: fifty days after Passover. It was a creation festival, fifty being the jubilee number, so every year, Israel disciplined herself to remember that every fifty years they would free their slaves, forgive one another's debts and give the land a rest for a year. It was a rhythm designed to humble everyone, curtailing any sense of rights and nurturing instead a communal gratitude. The land allowed to rest from the punishments of agriculture, it's as if the fallow earth silently forgives humanity for all that has been taken, and taken for granted, from the soil. Every year, the fifty rhythm is kept in the community's heart and mind. Clearly it's taken seriously. The city is full of people from all over the region, gathered to mark this existential rhythm. Centuries later, Jubilee is the word we choose for fiftieth years of things, hoping perhaps to turn celebrations from pride to gratitude. Wouldn't it be wonderful if this Jubilee we forgave some more international debt and invested in the nourishment of the land and, instead of sending people to Rwanda, gave seventy, or seven hundred, or seven thousand British passports to seekers of freedom?

That Pentecost be the day when the Holy Spirit chose to come and manifest herself to the amazement of the emerging church, shows that the Spirit's wisdom is all about perspective, forgiveness, gratitude and communal health. How startled the crowds are to hear the news of Jesus, each understanding in their own language. They are used to language being a barrier. Suddenly it is a matter of curiosity.

The Babel myth is a wonderful, subtle drama displaying the human condition. I imagine a small Hebrew child sitting on the Rabbi's knee asking, "why do people speak all different languages? Wouldn't it be easier if we all spoke the same? Then we wouldn't fight so much." Perhaps there were travellers' tales about some ruined city the desert, like Fatehpur Sikri in India, so a story was woven to show the child, not so much how things were, but how things are between us. The making of bricks captures the essence of human ingenuity, mastering the very elements of earth and fire, the creatures becoming creative, changing the state of things, shaping them to their purpose. With Rabbi's wit, the story teller casts God as a kind of curious tourist, sight-seeing, then comically being rather threatened by human ability. Of course, the Rabbi knows God is God, and can't be threatened by creation (he's teasing us about how easily we are threatened) but it allows him to invent languages and show our cultural diversity as a kind of frustration, rather than a blessing. The half finished tower left abandoned is a forlorn emblem of how nearly great we all often are. The story teller doesn't answer the child's question with factual information about the fascinating evolution of language, but he leaves her with a working vision of humanity's flawed greatness. The conflicted feelings the story leaves her with help her discern the ingenuity and foolishness she will encounter as she navigates this world. It may help her hold her own cultural identity, speak her mother tongues with both confidence and humility. That's how good myths work.

This weekend we have been thinking about our evolving identity in Britain over the last seventy years. Alerted by the treasures of Scripture, we can think over the amazing developments and changes of the last seven decades in which our country may indeed have played a part. But the story makes us remember, too, the environmental discoveries of that his age, so we remember our industrial brick and steel forging that has helped do so much damage. The story helps us keep both ingenuity and arrogance in our view, especially when we wondrously and potentially dangerously seek to command the elements, from vaccines to nuclear fission; from minerals to DNA.

You may or may find the Royal family a help or a hindrance in this reflection, or for most, perhaps it's a bit of both. Whatever varied views that may be represented here, from admiration of a devoted servant of the nation to suspicion of a privileged self-protecting family; from gratitude for

the stability suggested by monarchy, to bewilderment that we allow any un-elected powers to rule us, from sympathy to suspicion, the Queen on her Jubilee can be a kind of prism where, if we pause to look, we see refracted alongside it the many coloured aspects of our common life. In some ways, the vacuity of royalty is a help. It is a prism's emptiness that allows light to pass through and be seen in its richness. It could be that the silence, the inscrutability, the woman who prefers to question more than answer, the consistency as celebrity Prime Ministers pass through, provides a strange emptiness that can be full of us. When the tyranny of the majority becomes problematic, when the different kind of celebrity election requires becomes distorting of truth, when the numbers make for clumsy choices of leader, the oddly disempowered Queen appears like a question mark, just off centre, ensuring we don't idolise democracy, or receive its judgements uncritically.

It's easy to dismiss this. It can be said the pomp and ceremony is nothing to do with reality; has no bearing on our ordinary life. But when Ukrainian people screeched with delight as their team scored in Scotland, even as missiles flew over their heads in Eastern Ukraine, we don't say that football match has nothing to do with reality; we are moved, not dismissive of the contrived unity and projected hope of that football match. It becomes a prism for a moment, refracting terribly important things in the trivial, and we let it be so. In the longer term, whatever institutions and rites we evolve can be used well or badly. I think even those viscerally opposed to the existence of a monarchy will one day miss it very much, because having something to loathe with great principle is to have a trig point by which to navigate. On the one hand there are some very ugly, distorting and damaging expressions of national identity which overstate achievements, don't allow for nuance, and rely on putting others down and keeping others out. On the other hand, there is a risk we recoil so much from this that we don't do any corporate reflection or thanksgiving at all, causing a different set of spiritual disabilities.

We've heard the subtle Babel story, warning us off over-reaching. Jesus words to still half-understanding disciples is not to underestimate themselves. Even as Philip expresses dissatisfaction with what Jesus is leaving him, Jesus firmly places responsibility on them – and now us – to live in the world as people who know and trust Jesus; that is to say, people who know and trust the one through whom all things were made, entitled above all to claim regal status, is the kind of King who kneels and washes feet. When Jesus says "you will do greater works than I," he is speaking just after washing their feet, saying that in the power of the Advocate he will send, we will be capable of even greater acts of service, more astonishing reversals of role, more dignifying of the poor and unloved and unworthy. Centuries ago, on the Thursday of Holy Week, the monarch of this realm used to wash the feet of the poor. It was fear of the plague that meant that ritual was sterilised in to the giving of Maundy money. Seeing the powerful serving is always arresting. Remember the shock of the Sudanese diplomats when the Pope knelt and kissed their feet, begging them to make peace. You may indeed think the Queen has taken her oddest of roles and insisted it is a vocation. In her own terms and from where she began, she has, many of us would say, applied herself to it in a spirit of service. She has quietly enriched our male regal language, her presence as Queen nuancing our use of the word King for God in liturgy.

In the many-layered richness of this weekend, we should give free reign to our imagination to wander around our culture and present politics, seeking healthy identity, but not trying to fix it down too firmly. For difference is always humbling, that is why it is built into creation. Healthy identity is the key to finding difference a thrill not a threat. When the Holy Spirit fell upon the disciples, she emphatically did not make everyone the same. She accentuated the cultural linguistic differences between people, *then* helped them understand each other. It is not a reversing of the Babel-effect. The half built tower encourages us to name human powers, yet

never to take them too seriously. Pentecost is a gracious overwhelming of the stunted ambition and fragmentation Babel helps us understand. The Spirit of truth does not ignore or deny human stupidity and clumsiness, but helps us overwhelm them with lives of service.

The Holy Spirit is the key to the healing of nations. She is the difference between Commonwealth being a post-colonial euphemism and it being a lived reality. She is the balm for the healing of families, royal or otherwise, fragmented by racism or class-ism or any other form of jealousy. God's Spirit is the liberator of confidence, rekindling gratitude, enlivening curiosity and restoring perspective. It is her wisdom alone that can keep us alert both to the absurdities and contradictions in our condition, and also to the unexpected blessings our absurdities sometimes contain. Yes, this Pentecost-Jubilee shows us there are profound blessings to be found even things as comical and contrived as royalty.

A NATIONAL ANTHEM?

1 God save our gracious Queen,  
long live our noble Queen,  
God save the Queen.  
Send her victorious,  
happy and glorious,  
long to reign over us:  
God save the Queen.

2 Not on this land alone –  
but be God's mercies known  
from shore to shore.  
Lord, make the nations see  
that all should brothers[/sisters] be  
and form one family  
the wide world o'er.

(v1 Anon, v2 W E Hickson 1836)

## We affirm our faith

*We stand and at home, if able, we turn to look in the direction of Church, to affirm our faith in God, revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit:*

Deacon: We stand to affirm our common wealth, bound up in God's relational being as Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

**All: We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family  
in heaven and earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

(from Common Worship)

## INTERCESSIONS from Katie Birse

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ, let us pray to the Father.

Today at Pentecost, we thank you that your Holy Spirit was given to the disciples, and to all who believe. Holy Spirit, please guide and inspire us to act for good in your world. As we remember how the crowds gathered in Jerusalem, representing many nationalities, and speaking many languages - we pray for inclusivity & tolerance and an end to prejudice and discrimination.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, we pray for the universal Church, remembering especially those places where Christians are persecuted for their faith. At Pentecost, your Spirit was poured out on believers. Let us pray for those who are being welcomed to our faith via baptism and confirmation. Let the Church be a openhearted place for all who seek respite.

Strengthen David our bishop, David and Tariro and all your Church in the service of Christ, that those who confess your name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bless and guide Elizabeth our Queen at this time of Jubilee. Thank you for her life and service with her quiet wisdom, faith, and perseverance. We pray for her good health and your protection to her and her family. Thank you for these days of celebration and joy that we have shared.

Give wisdom to all in authority; and direct this and every nation in the ways of justice and of peace. We pray for the people of Ukraine and Russia during this time of war and suffering. Lord, help us to remember all those who suffer including those who we may not see on our screens.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, remembering especially: Ruth Tetlow, Tony Smith, Elizabeth Mountbatten-Windsor and all experiencing difficulties with mobility. We pray for those sleeping rough in Kings Heath, including Nathan.

Give them courage and hope in their troubles; and bring them the joy of your salvation. Thank you for all who care for the sick.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Hear us as we remember those who have died including Bill Gardner and those who died at this time of year. According to your promises, grant us with them a share in your eternal kingdom.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Rejoicing in the fellowship of all your saints, we commend ourselves and the whole creation to your unfailing love.

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, Amen.**

#### 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: "Have the trumpet sounded loud on the day of atonement" said the Lord. "You shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you." This jubilee we say to each other, and to all citizens, and all travellers among us:

**The Peace of the Lord be always with you.**

(cf Leviticus 25)

#### HYMN

1. There's a spirit in the air,  
telling Christians ev'rywhere:  
"Praise the love that Christ revealed,  
living, working, in our world!"

2. Lose your shyness, find your tongue,  
tell the world what God has done:  
God in Christ has come to stay.  
Live tomorrow's life today!

3. When believers break the bread,  
when a hungry child is fed,  
praise the love that Christ revealed,  
living, working, in our world.

4. Still the Spirit gives us light,  
seeing wrong and setting right:  
God in Christ has come to stay.

Live tomorrow's life today!

5. When a stranger's not alone,  
where the homeless find a home,  
praise the love that Christ revealed,  
living, working, in our world.

6. May the Spirit fill our praise,  
guide our thoughts and change our  
ways.  
God in Christ has come to stay.  
Live tomorrow's life today!

7. There's a spirit in the air,  
calling people ev'rywhere:  
Praise the love that Christ revealed,  
living, working, in our world.

*(words: Brian A Wren; music: John Wilson)*

*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 be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

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.**

God of surprises, your Spirit brooded over the waters at creation and lived among your chosen people in wilderness, exile and promised land. Your Spirit filled Mary's womb at the moment of Jesus' conception and came upon him like a dove at his baptism. When Christ died on the cross your power raised him from the tomb on the third day, and that same evening he breathed your forgiving grace on those who had deserted him. On the day of Pentecost you sent your Spirit upon the fearful disciples, filling them with fire, with power, with wonder and joy, and making them your church. And so we gladly thank you, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, singing the hymn of your unending praise:

*We repeat each line 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.**

God of comfort and strength, we look to your Holy Spirit to be with us in sorrow and in contentment, in crisis and in abiding stillness. Come among us now through the power of your Spirit that we may be transformed into your image and that these gifts of bread and wine may become for us the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ 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.**

God of dreams and prophecy, send down upon us your gifts of wisdom, knowledge and faith; of healing, discernment and interpretation, that your church may be built up in the likeness of your Son. Let anyone who is hungry find in you the bread of life, and anyone who is thirsty find in you rivers of living water. Speak your Word to all who are alone and in fear of despair, and let each one of your children hear your voice in their own language, whether that language be art or science, work or play. Sanctify your groaning creation that your universe may breathe your breath and be filled with your life anew, that we may love what you love and do what you would do, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, ever one God. **Amen.**

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

Deacon: In as many languages as we can express, we pray the prayer Jesus first taught in Aramaic:

**[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 [Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire](#)

1. Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,  
and lighten with celestial fire;  
thou the anointing Spirit art,  
who dost thy sev'nfold gifts impart.

2. Thy blessèd unction from above  
is comfort, life, and fire of love;  
enable with perpetual light  
the dullness of our blinded sight.

3. Anoint and cheer our soilèd face  
with the abundance of thy grace:  
keep far our foes, give peace at home;  
where thou art guide no ill can come.

4. Show us the Father and the Son,  
in thee and with thee, ever one.  
Then through the ages all along,  
this shall be our endless song.

5. "Praise to thy eternal merit,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit." Amen.

*(vv1-3, 5: John Cosin after Rabanus Maurus alt; v4 Michael Forster;  
music: 'Proper Sarum Melody', arr Andrew Moore)*

1. Praise the Lord. O praise God in his holiness:  
praise him in the firmament of his power.
2. Praise him for his mighty acts:  
praise him according to his excellent greatness.
3. Praise him with the blast of the trumpet:  
praise him upon the harp and lyre.
4. Praise him with timbrel and dances:  
praise him upon the strings and pipe.
5. Praise him with ringing cymbals:  
praise him upon the clashing cymbals.
6. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord:  
Praise the Lord.

Glory to the Father and to the Son:  
and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning is now,  
and shall be for ever. Amen.

*(setting: Charles V Stanford)*

## We are sent out

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

### THE BLESSING

Priest: Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage, hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honour everyone, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

HYMN [All people that on earth do dwell](#) (*short fanfare*)

1. All people that on earth do dwell,  
sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;  
him serve with fear, his praise forth tell,  
come ye before him and rejoice.

2. The Lord, ye know, is God indeed,  
without our aid he did us make;  
we are his folk, he doth us feed  
and for his sheep he doth us take.

3. O enter then his gates with praise,  
approach with joy his courts unto;  
praise, laud and bless his name always,  
for it is seemly so to do.

4. For why? the Lord our God is good:  
his mercy is for ever sure;  
his truth at all times firmly stood,  
and shall from age to age endure.

*(short fanfare)*

5. To Father, Son and Holy Ghost,  
the God whom heav'n and earth adore,  
from us and from the angel-host  
be praise and glory evermore.

*(short fanfare)*

Amen.

*(words: William Kethe, from 'Day's Psalter' [1560] alt;  
music: 'Genevan Psalter' [1551], attrib Louis Bourgeois, arr Ralph Vaughan Williams)*

*We acclaim:*

Deacon: Christ has gone up on high.

**Alleluia!**

God raised Christ from the dead

**and enthroned him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.**

God put all things in subjection beneath his feet

**and gave him as head over all things to the Church.**

We died and our life is hidden with Christ in God.

**We set our minds on things above.**

(Ephesians 1:20-23)

Christ has gone up on high.

**Alleluia!**



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***A prayer written for the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday***

God, to whom a thousand years are a moment in your sight,  
when Elizabeth Windsor was born, women could not vote.  
We thought we had had the war to end all wars.  
As we celebrate her ninetieth birthday, we wonder at what has happened.  
All adults can vote, though many do not.  
We had another war, then picked at scabs ever since, scrapping and bombing here and there.  
Now there's a European Union we're thinking of leaving.  
Nuclear weapons have destroyed cities.  
Then, with different rockets, someone landed on the moon.  
We forged a National Health Service from the wreckage of war.  
With ever greater sophistication we examine genes and craft bespoke cancer treatments.  
Heart and orthopaedic surgery has become ordinary.  
Information storage is transformed. The internet connects us.  
The internet isolates us.  
The rich and poor are further apart.  
We give thanks for the points of consistency, reference and anchorage that have eased us through such highs and lows. We thank you for the Queen: for her faithfulness and fortitude; her discipleship and patience; her sense of role and responsibility; the glow of humanity and wit sometimes allowed to shine through.  
This historic birthday, we pray for her to know our affection and your profound affirmation for all that is good in her life and service.

We pray for ourselves, as the Queen lends us the perspective of the long view. Teach us, either by our joy or our resentment, to take our roles and responsibilities, our political engagement, our discipleship and our family life, whatever its pattern, seriously. Help us to care for one another's ageing, and make us especially attentive to the strengths and needs of older people in our community. **Amen.**