

Welcome to  
your Parish Church  
in the Diocese of Birmingham



ALL SAINTS  
KINGS HEATH

## Mothering Sunday Holy Communion Fourth Sunday of Lent, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2023

### We gather

*If you are worshipping 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. Perhaps today you might also place some flowers or another thing you find simply beautiful.*

*Music as we gather in Church: a song reflecting on the character of God's Spirit, so often represented with feminine imagery in scripture.*

1. She sits like a bird, brooding on the waters,  
hovering on the chaos of the world's first day;  
she sighs and she sings, mothering creation,  
waiting to give birth to all the Word will say.
2. She wings over earth, resting where she wishes,  
lighting close at hand or soaring through the skies;  
she nests in the womb, welcoming each wonder,  
nourishing potential hidden to our eyes.
3. She dances in fire, startling her spectators,  
waking tongues of ecstasy where dumbness reigned;  
she weans and inspires all whose hearts are open,  
nor can she be captured, silenced or restrained.
4. For she is the Spirit, one with God in essence,  
gifted by the Saviour in eternal love;  
she is the key opening the scriptures,  
enemy of apathy and heavenly dove.

When the song ends we stand to sing: [All hail the power of Jesus' name](#)

1. All hail the pow'r of Jesus' name!  
Let angels prostrate fall;  
let angels prostrate fall;  
bring forth the royal diadem,  
and crown him, crown him, crown him,  
crown him, and crown him Lord of all.

3. All sinners, now redeemed by grace,  
who heard your Saviour's call,  
who heard your Saviour's call,  
now robed in light before his face,  
O crown him, crown him, crown him,  
crown him, and crown him Lord of all.

2. O prophets faithful to his word,  
in matters great and small,  
in matters great and small,  
who made his voice of justice heard,  
now crown him, crown him, crown him,  
crown him, and crown him Lord of all.

4. Let every people, every tongue  
to him their hearth enthral:  
to him their hearth enthral:  
lift high the universal song  
and crown him, crown him, crown him,  
crown him, and crown him Lord of all.

(words: Edward Perronet, adapt Michael Forster; music: James Ellor)

Priest: In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**  
Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ  
be with you all.

**All: And also with you.**

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: St Paul says: "Try to find out what is pleasing to God. Take no part in  
the unfruitful words of darkness."  
(Ephesians 5:11)

We confess the ways in which we have displeased God and deepened  
the world's gloom.

*God, where we have held to tightly to things, or people, Mother, have mercy.*

**Kyrie eleison**

God, where we have reacted out of fear of loss rather than trust and hope, Christ, have mercy.

**Christe eleison.**

God, when our parenting has been less generous than yours and our childhood less grateful than you deserve: Spirit have mercy.

**Kyrie eleison.**

Priest: The God of all healing and forgiveness draw you to himself, and cleanse you from all your sins, that you may behold the glory of his Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Deacon: Once you were in darkness, but now in God you are light.

**All: Let us live as children of light.** (Ephesians 5:8)

*We pray* THE COLLECT Mothering Sunday

God of love, passionate and strong, tender and careful: watch over us and hold us all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING [1 Samuel 16:1-13](#)

PSALM 23 *is sung in Church (You can follow the words below in the version sung after communion.) The picture of God setting the table for a heavenly meal is a picture perhaps of a woman leading her household's hospitality. (See also Proverbs 8)*

HYMN [Amazing grace](#)

1. Amazing grace! How sweet the sound  
that saved a wretch like me.  
I once was lost, but now I'm found;  
was blind, but now I see.

2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
and grace my fears relieved.  
How precious did that grace appear  
the hour I first believed.

3. Through many dangers, toils and snares  
I have already come.  
'Tis grace that brought me safe thus far,  
and grace will lead me home.

4. The Lord has promised good to me,  
his word my hope secures;  
he will my shield and portion be  
as long as life endures.

5. When we're been there a thousand years,  
bright shining as the sun,  
we've no less days to sing God's praise  
than when we first begun.

*(words: vv1-4 John Newton alt, v5 John Rees;  
music: American folk melody, arr Richard Lloyd; descant: Philip Moore)*

*We sit for a dramatic reading of the GOSPEL READING [John 9:1-41](#)*

*In church, when it is announced, we say:*

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

*At the end:*

This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*SERMON in Church is from David and will be on the website soon.*

*REFLECTION for those at home:*

*We have two somewhat unsettling Bible glimpses of motherhood in today's readings. Samuel has been inspired by God's Spirit in a rare and intense way such that he can converse frankly with God and perceive God's will for who should be anointed king. Samuel shaped his spiritual character from a very young age as apprentice to the angular, sometimes clumsy priest Eli, to whom Hannah, Samuel's mother, had entrusted her only son. What a safeguarding risk. What a letting go. Take the parents' hard decision about whether a boarding school is right for their child and multiply it threefold.*

*Then we meet the parents of the man, named only according to his disability: the "man born blind" or his economic status the man who "used to beg." Imagine their feelings. Perhaps you can because you, too, have a child who lives with disability of some kind. Think of the economic worries for someone at that time unable to work. Imagine how as they aged they would worry*

*about his life after they have gone. Imagine their excitement at his healing, quickly dashed by the Pharisees who present them with another economic challenge: expulsion from the Temple and therefore much societal interaction. They are so afraid that, when interrogated they distance themselves from their son: "Ask him. He is of age."*

*With both stories, we feel the compromise, fear, helplessness and letting go of human parenting. With Hannah in the background of the Samuel story, we feel the power of longing for motherhood, accentuated and contrasted by the ache of letting go that motherhood always entails from the very outset. This primeval human tension is vividly displayed and explored in scripture.*

*We only meet David's father Jesse, not his mother, but imagine her seeing her youngest son anointed King. What fear and pride, what confusion. How would she then relate to all her other sons?*

*All this tension and sacrifice can be handled well or badly. The big story with both readings is God's ability to make blessing, glory, witness and life emerge defiantly from our complexity and confusion. We should be shocked by the contrast between the life-stunting meanness of the Pharisees and the life giving, light shedding effect of relationship with Jesus. Perhaps we are prepared now for prayer.*

## We affirm our faith

**AFFIRMATION of FAITH** *At home, if you are able, you might stand and turn in the direction of Church.*

Deacon: We stand to affirm our faith in the motherhood of God as portrayed by St Anselm:

Jesus, like a mother you gather your people to you;  
**you are gentle with us as a mother with her children.**

Often you weep over our sins and our pride,  
**Tenderly you draw us from hatred and judgement.**

You comfort us in sorrow and bind up our wounds;  
**in sickness you nurse us, and with pure milk you feed us.**

Jesus, by your dying we are born to new life;  
**By your anguish and labour we come forth in joy.**

Despair turns to hope through your sweet goodness;  
**through your gentleness we find comfort in fear.**

Your warmth gives life to the dead,  
**Your touch makes sinners righteous.**

Lord Jesus, in your mercy heal us;  
**in your love and tenderness remake us.**

In your compassion bring grace and forgiveness;  
**for the beauty of heaven may your love prepare us.**

Written by the Revd Michael Vasey from the Prayers and meditations of St Anselm

INTERCESSIONS *in Church using this response:*

Leader: Lord, in your mercy,

**All: hear our prayer.**

*ending with*

Merciful Father,

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

*At home:*

*Remember King David's parents and let them lead you into prayer for any who are proud of their offspring, any who have to deal with the fallout from fame; any who struggle to treat their different children even-handedly.*

*As the healed man's parents seem to push him away slightly at a crucial moment pray, for any parents holding on too tight and any not holding on enough to their offspring. Although this man did nothing wrong, perhaps you might pray for a while for any parent who feels compromised by, ashamed, or afraid of what their child has become.*

*Expulsion from the Temple was a harsh sentence for being healed. We might pray for anyone whose innocent offspring are in prison or accused of wrongdoing. We pray for the families of political prisoners the world over.*

*Picturing the hard hearted Pharisees, in their terrible loss of perspective, we pray for anyone who meets disability with prejudice, a sense of threat, a desire to blame. As stricter sanctions on benefits are announced this week, we pray for any needing benefits because of disability.*

*Among those who are unwell we pray for Alan Wilson, Lynn Busfield and Iain Galloway. We pray for any new mothers facing health issues following birth, especially those separated from their new born child by an incubator.*

*Among those who have died we pray for Margaret Watson, Yvonne Hunt, Mike Cheesbrough, Carol Sewell and Christine Thomas.*

*We stand for THE PEACE*

Deacon: As a mother hen shelters her chicks under her wing, so Christ said he feels protective of you. The peace of the Christ be always with you.

**All: And also with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

HYMN *during which the Table is prepared* [Tell out, my soul](#)

1. Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord:  
unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;  
tender to me the promise of his word;  
in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.

2. Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name:  
make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;  
his mercy sure, from age to age the same;  
his holy name, the Lord, the mighty one.

3. Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might:  
pow'rs and dominions lay their glory by;  
proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,  
the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

4. Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word:  
firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.  
Tell out my soul, the greatness of the Lord  
to children's children and for evermore.

*(words: Timothy Dudley-Smith, based on Luke 1:46-55; music: Walter Greatorex)*

## We celebrate God's faithfulness

*We stand, if able, for the Eucharistic Prayer*

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 our Mothering God.

**It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is right to praise you, Mother, God of all creation; in your love you made us for yourself. When we turned away you did not reject us, but came to meet us in your Son.

**You embraced us as your children and welcomed us to sit and eat with you.**

In Christ you shared our life that we might live in him and he in us.

**He opened his arms of love upon the cross  
and made for all the perfect sacrifice for sin.**

On the night he was betrayed, at supper with his friends he took bread and gave you thanks; he broke it and gave it to them, saying: Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

**Mother, we do this in remembrance of him:  
his body is the bread of life.**

*A bell is rung*

At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine, he gave you thanks and said: Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins; do this in remembrance of me.

**Mother, we do this in remembrance of him:  
his blood is shed for all.**

*A bell is rung*

Send your Holy Spirit that this bread and wine may be to us the body and blood of your dear Son.

**As we eat and drink these holy gifts,  
make us one in Christ, our Risen Lord.**

With your whole church throughout the world we offer you this sacrifice of praise, lifting our voice to join the eternal song of heaven:

**Holy, holy, holy,  
My heart, my heart adores you.  
My heart is glad to say the words  
You are holy, God.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Deacon: As our Saviour taught us, each in our mother tongue, we pray:

**Our Mother 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. Eat in remembrance that he died for you and feed on him in your hearts with thanksgiving.

**Jesus, Lamb of God: have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, bearer of our sins: have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, redeemer of the world: grant us peace.**

*We pause to remember all who pray at home, then share the bread and wine, now for us the body and blood of Christ. All are welcome to receive. If you prefer not to share the common cup, receiving just the bread is as much communion as receiving both. If you prefer not to receive but would value a prayer of blessing do come forward and simply keep your hands by your sides. We will pray for you.*

*For the sake of those with gluten intolerance, please do not dip your wafer in the wine.*

*Today, all are invited to receive flowers from the children after you have received communion or a blessing.*

**ANTHEM** *after Communion*

1. The Lord's my shepherd I'll not want,  
he makes me down to lie  
in pastures green he leadeth me  
the quiet waters by.  
2. My soul he doth restore again,  
and me to walk doth make  
within the paths of righteousness

e'en for his own name's sake.

3. Yea, thou I walk in death's dark vale  
yet will I fear none ill.  
For thou art with me, and thy rod  
and staff me comfort still.

4. My table thou hast furnished  
in presence of my foes,

my head thou dost with oil anoint,  
and my cup overflows.

5. Goodness and mercy all my life  
shall surely follow me.  
And in God's house for evermore  
my dwelling place shall be.

*(words: Psalm 23, from 'The Scottish Psalter' [1650]; music: Chris O'Hara)*

1. Take me, Lord, use my life in the way you wish to do.  
Fill me, Lord, touch my heart till it always thinks of you.  
Take me now, as I am, this is all I can offer.

*Here today I, the clay, will be moulded by my Lord.*

2. Lord, I pray that each day I will listen to your will.  
Many times I have failed but I know you love me still.  
Teach me now, guide me, Lord, keep me close to you always.

3. I am weak, fill me now with your strength and set me free.  
Make me whole, fashion me so that you will live in me.  
Hold me now in your hands, form me now with your Spirit.

*(words & music: Francesca Leftley, arr Andrew Moore)*

## We are sent out

Priest: Loving God, as a mother feeds her children at the breast you feed us  
in this sacrament with the food and drink of eternal life: help us who  
have tasted your goodness to grow in grace within the household of  
faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

**All: 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 *In Church the priest declares God's blessing. At home we pray:*

*May Christ give us grace to grow in holiness, to deny ourselves, take up  
our cross and follow him: and the blessing of God almighty, the Father,  
the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among us and remain with us always.  
Amen.*

HYMN [Guide me, O thou great Redeemer](#)

1. Guide me, O thou great Redeemer,  
pilgrim through this barren land;  
I am weak, but thou art mighty,  
hold me with thy pow'rful hand:  
Bread of Heaven, Bread of Heaven,  
feed me till I want no more,  
feed me till I want no more.

2. Open now the crystal fountain,  
whence the healing stream doth flow;  
let the fire and cloudy pillar  
lead me all my journey through;  
strong deliv'rer, strong deliv'rer,  
be thou still my strength and shield,  
be thou still my strength and shield.

3. When I tread the verge of Jordan,  
bid my anxious fears subside;  
death of death, and hell's destruction,  
land me safe on Canaan's side;  
songs of praises, songs of praises,  
I will ever give to thee,  
I will ever give to thee.

*(words: William Williams, trans Peter Williams & others; music: John Hughes)*

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



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***Iona Service this evening, 6.30pm***