

Welcome to
your Parish Church
in the Diocese of Birmingham



ALL SAINTS
KINGS HEATH

Holy Communion

Third Sunday of Lent, 12th March 2023

We gather

A treat for our Anthem after Communion: *Come together everybody was written by Sarah Baker to be sung by massed primary schools at Symphony Hall in July 2022, in advance of the Commonwealth Games coming to Birmingham. It uses Queen Elizabeth II's messages to the Commonwealth at previous opening ceremonies of the Games and is a song about coming together in hope and love, and how there is strength in our diversity. We include it today in advance of Commonwealth Day, this year celebrated tomorrow.*

Music as we gather:

1. Here is love, vast as the ocean,
loving kindness as the flood,
when the Prince of life, our ransom,
shed for us his precious blood.
Who his love will not remember?
Who can cease to sing his praise?
He can never be forgotten
throughout heaven's eternal days.

2. On the mount of crucifixion
fountains opened deep and wide;
through the floodgates of God's mercy
flowed a vast and gracious tide.
Grace and love, like mighty rivers,
poured incessant from above,
and heaven's peace and perfect justice
kissed a guilty world in love.

3. In thy truth thou dost direct me
by thy Spirit through thy Word;
and thy grace my need is meeting,
as I trust in thee, my Lord.
Of thy fullness thou art pouring
thy great love and pow'r on me,
without measure, full and boundless,
drawing out my heart to thee.

(words: vv1&2 'Dyma gariad fel y moroedd' by William Rees, v3 attrib William Williams, trans William Edwards; music: Robert Lowry)

When the song ends we stand to sing: [All my hope on God is founded](#)

1. All my hope on God is founded;
he doth still my trust renew.
Me through change and chance he
guideth,
only good and only true.
God unknown, he alone
calls my heart to be his own.

2. Human pride and earthly glory,
sword and crown betray his trust;
what with care and toil he buildeth,
tow'r and temple, fall to dust.
But God's pow'r, hour by hour,
is my temple and my tow'r.

3. God's great goodness aye endureth,
deep his wisdom, passing thought:
splendour, light and life attend him,
beauty springeth out of naught.
Evermore, from his store,
new-born worlds rise and adore.

4. Still from earth to God eternal
sacrifice of praise be done,
high above all praises praising
for the gift of Christ his Son.
Christ doth call one and all:
ye who follow shall not fall.

*(words: Paraphrased by Robert Bridges alt,
based on 'Meine Hoffnung stehet feste' by Joachim Neander; music: Herbert Howells)*

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: We keep silence, then confess our sins in penitence and faith.
**God our Father, long-suffering, full of grace and truth, you
create us from nothing and give us life. You give you faithful
people new life in the waters of baptism. You do not turn your
face from us, nor cast us aside. We confess that we have
sinned against you and our neighbour. We have wounded your
love and marred your image in us. Restore us for the sake of
your Son, and bring us to heavenly joy, in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

We sing: **Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.**

("Lord, have mercy," tune from Ukraine)

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.**

We pray THE COLLECT for The Third Sunday of Lent

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; 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

OLD TESTAMENT READING [Exodus 17:1-7](#)

PSALM 95

O come, let us sing to the LORD;

let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;

let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are the depths of the earth;

the heights of the mountains are his also.

The sea is his, for he made it,

and the dry land, which his hands have formed.

O come, let us worship and bow down,

let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!

For he is our God,

and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

O that today you would listen to his voice!

Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah,

as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,

when your ancestors tested me,

and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work.

For forty years I loathed that generation

and said, 'They are a people whose hearts go astray,

and they do not regard my ways.'

Therefore in my anger I swore,

'They shall not enter my rest.'

NEW TESTAMENT READING [Romans 5:1-11](#)

HYMN [As the deer pants for the water](#)

1. As the deer pants for the water, so my soul longs after you.
You alone are my heart's desire and I long to worship you.

*You alone are my strength, my shield, to you alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart's desire and I long to worship you!*

2. I want you more than gold or silver, only you can satisfy.
You alone are the real joy-giver and the apple of my eye.

3. You're my friend and you are my brother, even though you are a king.
I love you more than any other, so much more than anything!

(words & music: Martin Nystrom, based on Psalm 42:1-2)

We sit for a dramatic reading of the GOSPEL READING [John 4:5-42](#)

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 Tariro*

REFLECTION for those at home: ROOTS In Touch for Sunday 12th March 2023

Flirting with theology

We consider our context this week

A Un chief asks: Will the Ukraine grain deal be renewed this month?

David Attenbrough shows the consequences of climate change up close as his new series reveals Britain's wild life.

World Health Organisation raises concern about the malnutrition of women, especially pregnant women far and wide, exacerbated by the Ukrainian and other conflicts - women again bearing the consequences of male-led conflict.

How are we educating women around the world and how well are we educating our own young people to work with metaphors and explore the biggest truths? It is heart-breaking to hear of suspected poisonings last week in Iranian schools.

The devastating consequences of othering were displayed in the murder of a Ukrainian prisoner of war, the granting of a last cigarette magnifying the culpability of his killers.

As we meet a bravely unselfish Samaritan woman in scripture, here in the tradition of Ms May and Ms Patel, Home Secretary Ms Bravaman works proudly on creating a hostile environment for asylum seekers and refugees. Women's suppressed voices are needed all over the world, especially in politics, but these three Home Secretaries warn us not to idealise. It is not a simple fix. Women can of course sometimes bring hostility as well as wisdom. Here is a Reuters link to glimpse ourselves from outside:

In such a week, although tired out by his journey, Jesus models conversation with an *other*, an excluded woman, a foreigner arguably from a competitively different faith. They find common ground (the Jacob's Well tradition) naming differences (John 4:20-22) then find deeper commonality in the life of the Spirit (John 4:23), leaving Jesus refreshed and her energised for evangelism.

Jacob kissed Rachel when he first met her at this well. Something similar happened for Moses and Zippah, for Rebecca and Isaac. There can be little doubt we are meant to feel a certain *frisson* as this young man and probably older but energetic woman meet in broad daylight at this auspicious place of refreshment. We don't need to over egg this, but we are intended to let the feeling of excitement and possible scandal surface as a profound and adventurous theological conversation begins.

This is the second of four conversations we hear this season (always worth hearing in church with several voices, the to and fro and sparkle heard more brightly than when read with one voice.) David Ford's brilliant new commentary shows Jesus forming a learning community in Chapter 1. Then John lets us eavesdrop on four (and more) conversations, spontaneous learning communities you might say, in which very different kinds of people search for meaning and shape their relationship with God.

It is fruitful to compare Nicodemus with this Samaritan woman. The respectable leader meets Jesus by night. This conversation with a disrespected, marginalised, powerless person happens at midday. (To this day we chuckle a bit about the five husbands.) They are both offered a metaphor to work with and both push back, testing it. If Nicodemus is left bewildered we may, without doing him down, celebrate the way the woman is more bright, energetic, enthusiastic ("never again...everything I ever...") and immediately becomes a commissioned evangelist. (John 4:16)

The broad effect is for John to introduce us to Jesus' playful metaphors (think of the *I am*s coming) and invites the reader to let them work on their heart. The whole gospel is about training our desires, David Ford says. In this risky, flirtatious atmosphere, Jesus has intelligent theological conversation with a woman from another culture. She is eager for it, grasping the opportunity of bumping into a prophet to explore the faith (. Whatever prejudice she has met in life, she is boldly hopeful that the Messiah is coming. Jesus will explore the theology of emerging creed and indeed theodicy, with intelligent community leaders Martha and Mary, too

His established learning community return and are surprised, but do not question him. As readers, too, we are invited to learn from this woman's learning, and from the way she learns and from the way she reacts and shares what she learns.

Not only might this extraordinary encounter prompt us to pray for women's ministry and theological training the world over, but also make us continually ask: if Jesus surprised people by talking theology with people beyond the bounds, and Acts shows the church learning repeatedly to do the same how far should we see those ripples continuing to surprise the church? Or did the boundaries of acceptability settle with the closing of the Canon?

Who, then, might we be surprised to see Jesus commissioning as evangelists today, whom we might hitherto have thought not worthy of his conversation?

In all sorts of contexts, we might ask "who is not included in this conversation that might even be about them?"

- In the shrill button-pushing talk about banning refugees from Britain if they arrive by strangely labelled "illegal" means, the voices of those making such perilous journeys are notably missing from the discourse.
- At least now, some church conversations about sexuality in some denominations are beginning to include the voices of those hitherto marginalised by our churches.
- Where are the voices from the poorest countries hit earliest by the consequences of climate change in the G7/Davos conversations about the world's economy?

Every one of us can respond to the exciting shock of Jesus and the Samaritan woman's sparky conversation by scanning our own groups, workplaces and educational institutions to see who is not in the room for any given conversation. What wisdom might we be missing?

Moved by the diversity of Jesus' conversation partners in John, every reader is invited to engage in their own theological conversation, always considering "how is my relationship with God?"

We affirm our faith

AFFIRMATION of FAITH

Deacon: We stand to affirm our faith in God's desire for the healing of the world, as revealed in Jesus:

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and on 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.

INTERCESSIONS *in Church are led by Rowland Cotterill, 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.**

Prompts for prayer for those at home:

John's opening of metaphor for faith-exploration might make us pray for language and literature teachers training our young people in emotional expression and intelligence.

Jesus' words about harvest might provoke intercession about the Ukrainian grain supply deal and then turn literal grain into metaphor, praying for the kind of spiritual food that will nourish cross-border relationship of spirit and truth.

The Samaritans graciously invited Jesus to stay. He graciously accepted. We might then pray for Ukrainian and other refugees, and open our hearts to learn from one another.

If our anxiety is around church unity or inter-faith relationships, we might pray for God to show us the Jacob's Well common ground, to name our difference and to find the bigger picture.

Among those who have died recently we pray for Dalton Yvonne Hunt, Michael Murray, Carol Sewell, Mike Cheesbrough, Margaret Watson and Rebecca Morse-Brown's father Kit.

We stand for THE PEACE

Deacon: Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The peace of the Lord 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*

1. I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto me and rest;

lay down, thou weary one, lay down thy head upon my breast."
I came to Jesus as I was, so weary, worn and sad;
I found in him a resting place, and he has made me glad.

2. I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Behold, I freely give
the living water, thirsty one; stoop down and drink and live."
I came to Jesus, and I drank of that life-giving stream;
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived, and now I live in him.

3. I heard the voice of Jesus say, "I am this dark world's light;
look unto me, thy morn shall rise, and all thy day be bright."
I looked to Jesus, and I found in him my star, my sun;
and in that light of life I'll walk till trav'ling days are done.

(words: Horatius Bonar; music: Traditional English melody, arr Ralph Vaughan Williams)

We celebrate God's faithfulness

We stand, if able, for the Eucharistic Prayer

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.

Living God, you created all things out of nothing; you called a people out of the desert; you sent your Son to us when we were hard-hearted and far from your grace; and you send your Holy Spirit to us today despite our foolishness and forgetfulness. Through your servant Moses you drew water out of the rock, and in your Son Jesus you brought living water that we might never be thirsty again. Out of your Son's pierced side on the cross flowed water and blood, and in the glory of his resurrection we are baptized into wondrous forgiveness and everlasting life with you. And so we gladly thank you, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, singing the hymn of your unending praise.

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Overflowing God, in you we discover that all our striving and thirsting is truly a striving and thirsting for you, and in our desert wanderings we find that only you can satisfy. Come among us in the power of your Holy Spirit, that your people may taste your living water 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.**

Cleansing God, bring the healing power of your living water to visit all who labour with disease today. Pour the refreshment of your living water to invigorate all who are weary. Send the momentum of your living water to roll down justice like a never failing stream. Make us your church a fountain of your living water, until the day when hunger and thirst are no more and we live your life abundant with the communion of saints and you are all in all, in the presence and companionship of your Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

ANTHEM *after Communion*

Come! Come all people!

If all people come together sharing hope and love
they can build a brighter future where ev'ryone plays a part.
As we share what we know together we'll grow
and we'll do greater things 'cos we're not alone.

Come together ev'rybody as friends and family;
we're connected, not divided, there's strength in our diversity.

When all people come together sharing hope and love
we will build a brighter future where ev'ryone plays a part.
As we share what we know together we'll grow

and we'll do greater things 'cos we're not alone.

Come together ev'rybody as friends and family;
we're connected, not divided, there's strength in our diversity.
Come together ev'rybody as friends and family;
we're connected, not divided,
there's strength, support and pow'r and love and hope in our diversity;
we are family.

(words & music: Sarah Baker)

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 *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

[Jesus is Lord! Creation's voice proclaims it](#)

1. Jesus is Lord! Creation's voice proclaims it,
for by his pow'r each tree and flow'r was planned and made.
Jesus is Lord! The universe declares it;
sun, moon and stars in heaven cry: Jesus is Lord!

*Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Lord!
Praise him with alleluias, for Jesus is Lord!*

2. Jesus is Lord! Yet from his throne eternal
in flesh he came to die in pain on Calv'ry's tree.
Jesus is Lord! From him all life proceeding,
yet gave his life as ransom thus setting us free.

3. Jesus is Lord! O'er sin the mighty conqu'ror,
from death he rose and all his foes shall own his name.
Jesus is Lord! God sends his Holy Spirit

to show by works of power that Jesus is Lord.

(words & music: David J Mansell)

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



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Service this evening, 6.30pm

Making Room for Each Other: Who's Missing?

A service of reflection, conversation and prayer. With the help of one of the Octave paintings, and following on from this morning's Gospel reading, we consider who might be left out of important conversations.

If you would like to, bring an example of a time when someone's voice has surprised you and changed the game.